



# 2007 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION STUDY

## FINAL SURVEY REPORT

PREPARED FOR THE

CITY OF SAN JOSÉ  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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***True North***  
**RESEARCH**

741 GARDEN VIEW COURT SUITE 208  
ENCINITAS, CALIFORNIA 92024  
PHONE 760.632.9900 FAX 760.632.9993  
WEB [WWW.TN-RESEARCH.COM](http://WWW.TN-RESEARCH.COM)





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## INTRODUCTION

On an annual basis, the City of San José's Development Service Partners<sup>1</sup> (Partners) collectively respond to 160,000 phone inquiries at the Development Center, process 700 planning applications, issue 33,000 building permits, and conduct 190,000 field inspections. As part of its commitment to provide high quality services that meet the needs of its customers, the Development Services program has sought to measure customer satisfaction and gain insight into how services can be improved through several feedback mechanisms. In addition to informal verbal and written feedback, for several years the Program has attempted to measure customer satisfaction through unscientific mail and E-mail surveys made available to customers at several key milestones in the development process.

Although all of these feedback mechanisms are valuable sources of information for the Partners in that they provide timely and accurate information about the opinions of specific customers, they do not necessarily provide an accurate picture of the Development Services program customer base as a whole. For the most part, the methods rely on the customer to initiate the feedback. Consequently, the methods suffer from what is known as a self-selection bias—the Partners receives feedback only from those customers who are motivated enough to initiate the feedback process. Moreover, these customers tend to be those who are either very pleased or very displeased with the service they have received. Their collective opinions are thus not necessarily representative of the program's customer base as a whole.

The motivation for the current study was to design and employ a methodology that would avoid the self-selection bias noted above and thereby provide statistically reliable measures of customer satisfaction among the Program's customer base.

**OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY** Customers form their overall opinions about a product or service based on a number of specific factors. Collectively, these factors shape customer satisfaction—and therefore can also be thought of as *key drivers* of customer satisfaction. The first step to providing excellent customer service is thus to understand *which* factors shape customers' opinions about the services provided by the Development Services Partners, as well as how customers prioritize the factors/drivers when forming their opinions of the Partners' performance.

The research framework for this study was originally developed by True North in 2006 and proceeded in two phases. During the design stage of the study, True North discussed performance issues with City staff, reviewed past survey findings, and considered relevant findings from similar studies conducted with Development Services Departments from other cities to identify potential key drivers of customer satisfaction. Having identified the potential key drivers of customer satisfaction, True North subsequently designed two versions of a customer survey to measure customers' opinions and experiences on each of the key dimensions. Two versions of the questionnaire were created to accommodate the differences between ministerial and discretionary projects. As long as they comply with the Municipal Code, *ministerial* projects do not require a public hearing and are approved administratively by the City (e.g., electrical panel upgrade). In

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1. The City's Development Services Partners include the Planning Division, Building Division, Public Works Department, and Bureau of Fire Prevention.

contrast, a *discretionary* project requires a public hearing (e.g., conditional use permit, zoning change). Even if the project complies with the Municipal Code, the decision-makers still have some discretion in deciding whether to approve the project.

The questionnaires and interviewing protocol used for the 2007 study are nearly identical to those first employed in 2006. A total of 1,000 randomly selected customers who were associated with at least one permit between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2007 participated in the study via telephone or online at a secure website hosted and managed by True North. Data were collected between January 17 to February 12, 2008. The telephone interviews averaged 14 minutes for ministerial customers, 13 minutes for discretionary customers. A full description of the methodology used for the survey is included later in this report (see *Questionnaires & Toplines* on page 80).

**STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE** As noted above, this is not the first statistically reliable customer satisfaction study conducted for the Development Services Department. A similar study was first developed and administered in 2006. Because there is a natural interest in tracking the Department's performance in meeting the evolving needs of its customers, where appropriate the results of the 2007 study are compared with the results of identical questions used in the 2006 surveys. In such cases, True North conducted the appropriate tests of statistical significance to identify changes that likely reflect actual changes in customer opinion between 2006 and 2007—as opposed to being due to chance associated with selecting two samples independently and at random. Differences between the two studies are identified as *statistically significant* if we can be 95% confident that the differences reflect an actual change in customer opinion between the two studies. Statistically significant differences within response categories over time are denoted by the † symbol which appears in the figure next to the appropriate response value.

**ORGANIZATION OF REPORT** This report is designed to meet the needs of readers who prefer a summary of the findings as well as those who are interested in the details of the results. For those who seek an overview of the findings, the sections titled *Just the Facts* and *Conclusions* are for you. They provide a summary of the most important factual findings of the survey in bullet-point format and a discussion of their implications. For the interested reader, this section is followed by a more detailed question-by-question discussion of the results from the survey by topic area (see *Table of Contents*), as well as a description of the methodology employed for collecting and analyzing the data. And, for the truly ambitious reader, the questionnaires used for the interviews are contained at the back of this report, a complete set of crosstabulations is contained in Appendix A, and a complete list of verbatim responses (gathered from Question 16 of the ministerial version and Question 15 of the discretionary version) is contained in Appendix B.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** True North would like to thank the staff at the City of San José who contributed their valuable input during the design stage of this study. Their expertise, insight and local knowledge improved the overall quality of the research presented here.

**DISCLAIMER** The statements and conclusions in this report are those of the authors (Dr. Timothy McLarney and Richard Sarles) at True North Research, Inc. and not necessarily those of the City of San José's Development Services Partners. Any errors and omissions are the responsibility of the authors.

**ABOUT TRUE NORTH** True North is a full-service survey research firm that is dedicated to providing public agencies with a clear understanding of the values, perceptions, priorities and concerns of their constituents and customers. Through designing and implementing scientific surveys, focus groups and one-on-one interviews, as well as expert interpretation of the findings, True North helps its clients to move with confidence when making strategic decisions in a variety of areas—such as planning, policy evaluation, performance management, organizational development, establishing fiscal priorities, and developing effective communication campaigns.

During their careers, Dr. McLarney (President) and Mr. Sarles (Principal Researcher) have designed and conducted over 400 survey research studies for public agencies—including more than 250 studies for California municipalities and special districts.



## JUST THE FACTS

The following is an outline of the main factual findings from the survey. For the reader's convenience, we have organized the findings according to the section titles used in the body of this report. Thus, if you would like to learn more about a particular finding, simply turn to the appropriate report section.

### PROCESS, ROLE & PROJECT TYPE

- Just over one-third (37%) of **ministerial**<sup>2</sup> customers surveyed were personally involved in all three stages of the permitting process on their most recent project—permit application and issuance, plan check, and building inspection. An additional 44% of customers were involved in two of the three stages, whereas a minority of customers (19%) were personally involved in just one of the key stages on their most recent project.
- Fifty-two percent (52%) of **discretionary** customers surveyed were personally involved in all three stages of their most recent project—permit application, plan review and public hearing. An additional 33% of customers were involved in two of the three stages, whereas 16% of discretionary customers were personally involved in only one of the key stages on their most recent project.
- Over three-quarters (77%) of **discretionary** customers in 2007 reported that they personally worked with a Project Manager assigned by the City on their most recent project.
- When **ministerial** customers were asked to describe their role on their most recent project, 41% selected contractor, 23% mentioned owner, 20% mentioned architect, and 19% chose agent or representative. Approximately 14% described their role as engineer, 10% as permit runner, and 4% indicated that their role was something 'other' than the options previously mentioned.
- The most common role among **discretionary** customers was agent or representative (25%), followed by architect (21%), and contractor (20%). Fourteen percent (14%) described their role as engineer, 11% as planner, 10% served as a permit runner, and 8% indicated that their role was something other than the previously mentioned options.
- Among **ministerial** customers, 54% described their most recent project as commercial, 39% described it as residential in nature, 5% described it as mixed-use, and 1% were not sure.
- **Discretionary** customers were most likely to describe their most recent project as residential (45%). Approximately 38% described their project as commercial, 17% indicated that it was a mixed-use project, and 1% were not sure.
- When **ministerial** customers were asked to further describe the nature of their project, the dominant category among *residential* projects in 2007 was remodel or addition (55%), followed by new construction (21%). For *commercial* projects, half of ministerial customers described the project as a tenant improvement (50%) in 2007, whereas 18% selected new construction.

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2. As long as they comply with the Municipal Code, *ministerial* projects do not require a public hearing and are approved administratively by the City (e.g., electrical panel upgrade). In contrast, a *discretionary* project requires a public hearing (e.g., conditional use permit, zoning change). Even if the project complies with the Municipal Code, the decision-makers still have some discretion in deciding whether to approve the project.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION

- Overall, nearly four out of five **ministerial** customers (79%) in 2007 indicated that they were either very (45%) or somewhat (34%) satisfied with the service that they received from the Development Services Partners on their most recent project. Twenty percent (20%) of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with the Partners' performance, and 1% were unsure.
- More than two-thirds of **discretionary** customers (68%) indicated that they were either very (37%) or somewhat (31%) satisfied with the service that they received on their most recent project in 2007. Less than one-third (31%) of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with the Partners' performance, and approximately 1% were unsure.

## PERMIT APPLICATION & ISSUANCE

- Eighty-nine percent (89%) of **ministerial** customers indicated that they were personally involved in the permit application and issuance stage on their most recent project.
- More than 85% of **ministerial** customers agreed that staff at the permit counter were courteous (95%), accessible (91%), helpful (91%), responsive (90%), knowledgeable (87%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (89%).
- The vast majority of **ministerial** customers also agreed that they received a clear explanation of the fees, taxes and deposits (79%), that the fees and taxes were assessed accurately (84%), and that the wait time at the permit counter before being assisted by staff was reasonable (88%).
- **Ministerial** customers were also generally satisfied with staff's efforts to communicate the process and steps needed to obtain a permit (80%), and provide clear, correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit (83%).
- Overall, 85% of **ministerial** customers in 2007 indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the permit application stage on their most recent project.
- Eighty-nine percent (89%) of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were personally involved in the permit application stage on their most recent project.
- At least 75% of **discretionary** customers agreed that staff at the permit counter were courteous (93%), accessible (89%), helpful (85%), responsive (86%), knowledgeable (78%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (87%).
- More than 80% of **discretionary** customers also agreed that the wait time at the permit counter before being assisted by staff was reasonable (86%), and that the fees were assessed accurately (82%).
- When compared to the other performance dimensions tested, communication received the lowest satisfaction scores from **discretionary** customers—including communicating the process and steps needed to obtain a permit (76%), providing clear, correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit (73%), and providing a clear explanation of the fees (76%).
- Overall, 78% of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the permit application stage on their most recent project.

## PLAN CHECK & PLAN REVIEW

- Seventy-nine percent (79%) of **ministerial** customers reported they were personally involved in the plan check stage of their most recent project.
- At least 80% of **ministerial** customers agreed that plan check staff were courteous (94%), knowledgeable (90%), helpful (89%), responsive (85%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (82%).
- A similarly high percentage of **ministerial** customers also agreed that plan check comments were clear and understandable (87%), were based on the code (84%), were consistent (82%), made sense for the project (81%), and the number of plan rechecks was reasonable (83%).
- When compared to the other performance dimensions tested, **ministerial** customers expressed somewhat lower levels of satisfaction with the timing of plan correction requests (80%), the reasonableness of the turn-around time set by the City for plan check (75%), the City's performance in meeting the target date set for completing plan check (75%), and the adequacy of communication between city staff about the project during plan check (79%).
- Overall, 80% of **ministerial** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the plan check stage.
- Ninety percent (90%) of **discretionary** customers reported they were personally involved in the plan review stage of their most recent project.
- At least two-thirds of **discretionary** customers agreed that plan check staff were courteous (89%), knowledgeable (73%), helpful (74%), responsive (73%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (73%).
- Although at least two-thirds of **discretionary** customers also felt that plan review comments were clear and understandable (72%), were based on the code (70%), and the number of plan rechecks was reasonable (72%), fewer perceived that the comments and corrections made sense for the project (66%), and that the comments and corrections were consistent (56%).
- **Discretionary** customers expressed the lowest levels of satisfaction with the timing of plan correction requests (53%), the reasonableness of the turn-around time set by the City for plan review (60%), the City's performance in meeting the target date set for completing plan review (52%), and the adequacy of communication between city staff about the project during plan review (60%).
- Overall, 66% of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the plan review stage.

## PROJECT MANAGER

- Seventy-seven percent (77%) of **discretionary** customers indicated they personally worked with a Project Manager assigned by the City on their most recent project.
- At least three-quarters of **discretionary** customers agreed that the Project Manager was courteous (92%), knowledgeable (77%), helpful (81%), and responsive (74%).
- More than two-thirds of **discretionary** customers also agreed that the Project Manager communicated clearly regarding the process and steps needed to get to a public hearing (72%),

that once all of the documents were ready, the Project Manager scheduled the hearing within a reasonable amount of time (76%), the Project Manager provided reasonable estimates of the processing costs throughout the project (71%), and that the project comment letter was accurate and complete (69%).

- Overall, 72% of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Project Manager on their most recent discretionary project.

## PUBLIC HEARING

- Sixty percent (60%) of **discretionary** customers indicated they were personally involved in the public hearing stage on their most recent project.
- Approximately 85% of **discretionary** customers agreed that staff represented their project in a fair, professional manner (89%), that the decision-makers were fair in how they made their decisions (86%), and that they were given adequate information by staff about how the public hearing process would go (89%).
- Over 80% of **discretionary** customers perceived that the item was heard within a reasonable amount of time at the public hearing (84%), that the appeal process is fair and reasonable (82%), that they were given adequate time to review permits and resolutions prior to the public hearing (84%), and that the Public Outreach process is fair and reasonable (83%).
- A slightly smaller proportion of **discretionary** customers indicated that the project comment letter provided clear and correct instructions about the documents needed before a public hearing could be scheduled (78%).
- Overall, 82% of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the public hearing stage.

## BUILDING INSPECTIONS

- Nearly half (49%) of **ministerial** customers indicated they were personally involved in the inspection stage on their most recent project.
- The vast majority of **ministerial** customers agreed that inspectors arrived on-time for scheduled appointments (88%) and were courteous (94%), responsive (89%), knowledgeable (92%), helpful (90%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (84%).
- Although eight out of ten **ministerial** customers agreed that written notices and corrections were clear and understandable (89%) and that inspectors only requested a change if it was required to meet code (82%), the levels of agreement were somewhat lower with respect to the perceived consistency of notices and corrections issued by different inspectors on the project (74%), the consistency of inspectors' comments with those of plan check staff (78%), and that changes were requested only if they made sense for the project (78%).
- Overall, 85% of **ministerial** customers agreed that they were satisfied with the service they received during the inspection stage of the process.



## FIRE DEPARTMENT

- Forty-one percent (41%) of **ministerial** customers surveyed indicated that they had received permit, project review, or inspection services from San José's Fire Department in the six months prior to the interview. The corresponding figure among **discretionary** customers was 56%.
- At least 90% of **ministerial** customers agreed that Fire Department staff were courteous (97%), knowledgeable (96%), helpful (95%), responsive (92%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (94%).
- At least 85% of **ministerial** customers also agreed that the wait time at the permit counter before being assisted by Fire Department staff was reasonable (93%), that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (88%), and that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (87%).
- When compared to the other dimensions tested, **ministerial** customers expressed slightly lower levels of satisfaction with respect to timeliness of performance and certain aspects of communication—including communication/coordination between Departments during plan review (78%), communication regarding the process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit (84%), the reasonableness of the turn-around time set for plan review (82%), and the completion of the plan review process by the target date set by the Fire Department (84%).
- Overall, 90% of **ministerial** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Fire Department.
- At least 80% of **discretionary** customers agreed that Fire Department staff were courteous (94%), knowledgeable (89%), helpful (90%), responsive (84%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (86%).
- Although at least 80% of **discretionary** customers also agreed that the wait time at the permit counter before being assisted by Fire Department staff was reasonable (91%) and that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (83%), a smaller percentage agreed that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (76%).
- **Discretionary** customers generally expressed somewhat lower levels of satisfaction with respect to timeliness of performance and certain aspects of communication—including communication/coordination between Departments during plan review (69%), communication regarding the process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit (79%), the reasonableness of the turn-around time set for plan review (78%), and the completion of the plan review process by the target date set by the Fire Department (79%).
- Overall, 81% of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Fire Department.



## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

- Twenty-one percent (21%) of **ministerial** customers surveyed indicated that they had received permit, project review, or inspection services from San José's Public Works Department in the six months prior to the interview. The corresponding figure among **discretionary** customers was 47%.
- At least 80% of **ministerial** customers agreed that Public Works staff were courteous (93%), knowledgeable (89%), helpful (84%), responsive (84%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (85%).
- At least three-quarters of **ministerial** customers also agreed that the wait time at the permit counter before being assisted by Public Works staff was reasonable (92%), that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (83%), that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (76%), that the process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated (80%), that the turn-around time set by the Public Works Department for plan review was reasonable (81%), and that the plan review process was completed by the target date set by the Public Works Department (80%).
- When compared to the other dimensions tested, **ministerial** customers expressed somewhat lower levels of satisfaction with respect to the communication/coordination between Departments during plan review (73%).
- Overall, 82% of **ministerial** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Public Works Department on recent projects.
- At least three-quarters of **discretionary** customers agreed that Public Works staff were courteous (91%), knowledgeable (82%), helpful (81%), responsive (77%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (76%).
- Most **discretionary** customers also agreed that the wait time at the permit counter before being assisted by Public Works staff was reasonable (89%), that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (67%), that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (59%), and that the process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated (70%).
- When compared to the other dimensions tested, **discretionary** customers expressed somewhat lower levels of satisfaction with respect to the Public Works Department's completion of the plan review process by the target date (57%), the communication/coordination between Departments during plan review (53%), the consistency of plan review comments and corrections (59%), and the reasonableness of the turn-around time set by the Department for plan review (58%).
- Overall, 72% of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Public Works Department on recent projects.

## INFORMATION ACCESS

- More than three-quarters of **ministerial** customers indicated that they were either very satisfied (35%) or somewhat satisfied (44%) with the Partners' efforts to make information available to them through the Development Services website, brochures, and meetings.

- Approximately 62% of **ministerial** customers reported that they had visited the Development Services' website in the 12 months prior to the interview.
- Eighty-five percent (85%) of **ministerial** customers who had visited the Development Services' website indicated that they were satisfied with the content of the site.
- Approximately three-quarters of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were either very satisfied (29%) or somewhat satisfied (44%) with the Partners' efforts to make development services information available to them through the Development Services website, brochures, and meetings.
- Approximately three-quarters (74%) of **discretionary** customers reported that they had visited the Development Services' website in the 12 months prior to the interview.
- Eighty-five percent (85%) of **discretionary** customers who had visited the Development Services website reported that they were satisfied with the content of the site.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- When **ministerial** customers were provided with an open-ended opportunity to suggest changes or improvements in the area of development services that they would most like the City to make, the most common response to this question among in 2007 was 'not sure' (22%), followed by none/everything is fine (18%). Among the specific improvements suggested, decreasing turnaround times (8%), improving online access to information (8%), and clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees (6%) were the top suggestions.
- When **discretionary** customers were provided with an open-ended opportunity to suggest changes or improvements in the area of development services that they would most like the City to make, the most common response to this question in 2007 was 'not sure' (19%), followed by none/everything is fine (14%). Among the specific improvements suggested, improving/simplifying the process (8%), improving intra-departmental communication (7%), and clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees (6%) were the top suggestions.

## PERCEPTIONS OF CITY

- At least three-quarters of **ministerial** customers generally agreed that the City of San José's Development Services Partners' care about their customers (85%), have improved customer service in the past 12 months (79%), and do an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project (75%).
- Approximately two-thirds of **ministerial** customers perceived that the Partners' acknowledge a mistake when it has been made (66%), and do their best to fix a mistake when one occurs (71%).
- Approximately three-quarters of **discretionary** customers generally agreed that the City of San José's Development Services Partners' care about their customers (75%).
- Approximately two-thirds of **discretionary** customers agreed that the Partners do an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project (69%), and have improved customer service in the past 12 months (68%).

- The proportion of **discretionary** customers who felt that the Partners' acknowledge a mistake when it has been made (58%) and do their best to fix a mistake when one occurs (65%) was somewhat lower.

## CONCLUSIONS

As noted in the *Introduction*, this study was designed to provide the City of San José's Development Services Partners with a statistically reliable understanding of customers' satisfaction, priorities and needs as they relate to services provided by the Program. In addition to providing the Partners with a means of measuring and tracking their performance, this study gathers information that can assist the Partners in making sound, strategic decisions in a variety of areas—including prioritizing service improvements and enhancements, planning, policy evaluation, staffing, training and budgeting.

Whereas subsequent sections of this report are devoted to conveying the detailed results of the survey, in this section we attempt to 'see the forest through the trees' and note how the collective results of the survey answer some of the key questions that motivated the research. The following conclusions are based on True North's interpretations of the 2007 survey results, comparisons to the 2006 survey results, as well as the firm's experience conducting similar studies for Development Services Departments in other California municipalities.

**HOW WELL IS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PERFORMING OVERALL?** Considering that the Development Services Partners have a *regulatory* relationship with their customers and that they must balance the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project, the results of the study indicate that the Partners are performing quite well in what are often difficult circumstances. Moreover, the results clearly indicate that the Partners have improved their performance in dozens of key service areas during the past year.

Better than three-quarters of ministerial customers and approximately two-thirds of discretionary customers indicated that they were generally satisfied with the Partners' performance in meeting their needs on their most recent projects in 2006. Not only did the overall levels of satisfaction increase for both customer groups in 2007, the *intensity* of satisfaction increased significantly among ministerial and discretionary customers. Indeed, whereas 39% of ministerial customers and 27% of discretionary customers indicated that they were *very* satisfied with the service they received on their most recent project in 2006, the corresponding values in 2007 were 45% and 37%, respectively.

The vast majority of ministerial and discretionary customers also perceived that the Partners' have improved their customer service in the past year, gave high marks to the Partners' efforts to communicate and make information available to customers, and indicated that the Partners do an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project.



Perhaps most importantly, of the 34 specific service dimensions where customers noted a statistically significant difference in the Partners' performance in the past year (see Table 1 for a summary), 31 of the changes were in the positive direction. That is, the Partners improved their performance in 31 areas and declined in just three areas.

TABLE 1 SUMMARY OF SERVICE DIMENSIONS WITH SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN 2007

Positive Performance Changes	
Discretionary	
Overall satisfaction: Service during most recent discretionary project	
Agreement: Coordination with other departments seamless	
Agreement: Process, steps needed for clearance or permit clearly communicated	
Ministerial	
Overall satisfaction: Service during most recent ministerial project	
Agreement: Staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	
Agreement: Overall, satisfied with permit application process	
Agreement: Permit application steps clearly communicated	
Agreement: Staff at the permit application counter were helpful	
Agreement: Permit application counter staff made effort to understand needs	
Agreement: Received clear, correct instructions about permit application documents	
Agreement: Wait time at office reasonable	
Agreement: Staff at the permit application counter were accessible	
Agreement: Staff at the permit application counter were responsive	
Agreement: Adequate communication among City staff during plan check	
Agreement: Plan check staff were responsive	
Agreement: Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time	
Agreement: Plan check process was completed by target date	
Agreement: Plan check staff made effort to understand customer needs	
Agreement: Number of plan rechecks was reasonable	
Agreement: Plan check staff were helpful	
Agreement: Plan check staff were knowledgeable	
Agreement: Inspectors made effort to understand customer needs	
Agreement: Inspectors were helpful	
Agreement: Inspectors were knowledgeable	
Agreement: Written notices clear, understandable	
Agreement: Overall, satisfied with service received from Fire Department	
Agreement: Fire Department staff made effort to understand needs	
Agreement: Plan review process was completed by the target date	
Agreement: Wait time at counter reasonable	
Agreement: Turn-around time for plan review was reasonable	
Agreement: Wait time at counter reasonable	
Negative Performance Changes	
Discretionary	
Overall satisfaction: Information availability, accessibility	
Agreement: Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	
Agreement: Turn-around time for plan review was reasonable	

**WHERE ARE THE PARTNERS PERFORMING PARTICULARLY WELL?** Perhaps the most important recommendation—one that is occasionally overlooked in customer satisfaction research—is for the Partners to recognize the many things that they do well and to focus on continuing to perform at a high level in these areas. As noted throughout this report, customers were generally pleased with the Partners' performance in many areas—especially the courtesy, knowledge, responsiveness and helpfulness exhibited by Development Services staff. The Partners are also clearly on a path of improvement since 2006. The top priority for the Partners should thus be to do what it takes to maintain the high quality of services in areas where customers have come to expect the Partners to perform well.

For convenience, we have organized the following discussion according to the key drivers of customer satisfaction that are typically found among customers of Development Services Departments.<sup>3</sup> The areas where the Partners are currently performing particularly well include accessibility, responsiveness, staff competency and sufficiency, and attitude/culture.

**Accessibility** When customers need assistance from Development Services, they want to have reasonable access by phone, fax, Internet, E-mail and/or in-person (as appropriate) to the information and/or staff member who can resolve their issues. In general, customers gave the Development Services staff high marks for accessibility.

**Responsiveness** Customers want Development Services staff to be responsive to their needs. Wait time is one of the key aspects of responsiveness and refers to the time that customers actively wait at the counter, on the phone, or at a project site to receive service from staff on a particular issue. Long waits times on the phone, in-person, or when expecting a response from staff are frustrating for customers and should be avoided. The concept of wait time applies not only to the availability of personnel, but also to materials, records and decisions that must be made on a project for it to move forward.

The Department received mixed reviews with respect to responsiveness. On the positive side, the vast majority of customers indicated that the wait times at the permit application counter were reasonable, and ministerial customers gave increasingly high marks for responsiveness to inspectors, plan check staff, and to staff at the permit application counter. Among discretionary customers, however, a sizeable minority continued to indicated that plan review staff and project managers could be more responsive.

**Staff Competency and Sufficiency** The competency and number of staff directly affect many of the other factors identified in this report—such as communication, consistency and timeliness—so it is worth highlighting this factor as its own category. The bottom line is that customers expect Development Services to have a sufficient number of adequately trained staff who have the knowledge needed to help them resolve issues in an efficient manner.

Staff competency and sufficiency are areas where Development Services received consistently high marks. At least three-quarters of customers agreed that staff at the permit application, plan review *and* inspection stages were knowledgeable—and lack of staff was specifically mentioned as an issue by less than 3% of customers during the study. Ministerial customers also noted statistically significant improvement in the knowledge of staff at all three stages (permit counter, plan check, and inspections) since the baseline study in 2006.

It should be noted, however, that discretionary customers—especially those who were generally dissatisfied with the service they received on their most recent project—identified the need to increase staff’s general training and knowledge as being among their top suggestions for improvement. Moreover, to the extent that insufficient staff increases turnaround time for other tasks, it may be an area for improvement.

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3. True North has completed over 50 qualitative interviews and more than 6,000 survey interviews with customers of Development Services Departments in California. The key drivers of customer satisfaction discussed in this section are a subset of the most important drivers based on our collective experience working with San José’s Development Services Partners and similar departments in other cities.

**Attitude/Culture** A consistent theme of research among Development Services Departments is the importance that customers place on how they are treated by staff. The bottom line is that a good attitude on the part of staff appears to go a long way in terms of keeping a customer satisfied as they navigate what is a complex and, at times, frustrating process. Customers want to interact with staff who are professional, respectful of their time, are solution oriented as opposed to problem focused, and are helpful. From the top down, customers want a Development Services Program that is concerned about its customers' interests and acts accordingly.

In general, customers continued to hold very positive perceptions of Development Services staff with respect to their interest in serving customers' needs, their courtesy, and their helpfulness. This pattern was consistent across the three permitting stages, with permit counter, plan review and inspection staff all receiving very high marks. The vast majority of customers also perceived that the Partners care about their customers.

**WHERE SHOULD THE PARTNERS FOCUS ON IMPROVEMENT?** In the spirit of constant improvement, the study identified aspects of the Partners' performance that could be enhanced or improved—if only from the perspective of a minority of customers. The key areas of improvement are with respect to communication, consistency, accountability, and timeliness of performance. Although these areas were at the top of the list for improvement in 2006 and remain so for 2007, it should be noted that the Partners posted statistically significant improvements in each of the areas in the past year.

**Communication** There are many aspects of communication that appear to shape customers' perceptions of, and attitudes about, the Development Services Program. Customers desire communications that are clear, specific, thorough and correct. This applies to both staff-customer communications and communications between staff assigned to a project, as well as to verbal communications and written reports, comments and instructions. Customers also want regular communication (or at least the ability to obtain the information) regarding the status of projects as they move through the process. By communicating in this way, the Partners will enable customers to better navigate the submittal, review and inspection processes and avoid problems—such as late hits during plan review—that are costly in terms of time and money.

With respect to communication, customers generally recognize that the Partners are doing an admirable job in making information available to customers via the Development Services website, brochures, and meetings. Overall, approximately three-quarters of customers indicated that they were satisfied with the Partners' performance in this respect. Nevertheless, some customers desired that more information, tools and resources be made available online. Despite statistically significant improvements in various aspects of communication during the past year, improving the clarity of staff-customer communications, as well as improving inter- and intra-departmental communication on specific projects, were also viewed as priorities from the customers' perspective. It is worth noting that perceptions of staff's performance in communicating with customers or other staff members continue to be among the key factors that distinguished customers who were satisfied with the Partners' overall performance from those who were dissatisfied.

**Consistency** Customers desire a process that is fair and predictable, which requires consistency in both the structure and application of fees, rules, policies and procedures. Put simply, the same rules and procedures should apply to similar projects—they should not vary because of



the individual staff members assigned to accept, review or inspect a project or due to political concerns. Inconsistent (and subjective) interpretations of codes and regulations should be avoided. Consistency between Development Services staff across stages of the permitting process is also important to keep projects on track.

Although most customers gave the Partners positive reviews with respect to consistency, some noted that they received inconsistent comments and corrections during plan review, as well as conflicting instructions for a given project between plan review and inspection staff, or between different inspectors. Concern regarding consistency (and coordination between departments that impacts consistency) was particularly pronounced among discretionary customers and when customers were commenting on the plan review stage or projects that involved the Public Works Department. Setting and maintaining clear, consistent standards was among the top specific improvements sought by both ministerial and discretionary customers.

**Accountability** Customers want a Development Services Program that is accountable to them. So long as customers uphold their end of the deal, they feel that the Partners should uphold their end. This applies to processing projects according agreed-upon schedules, taking ownership of mistakes and fixing them in a proactive manner, and all types of decisions and actions.

The survey results indicate that this continues to be a priority area for improvement. Although most customers gave the Partners' positive reviews, a sizeable minority felt that the Partners often refuse to acknowledge a mistake they have made and/or do not do their best to fix the mistake. This pattern was especially pronounced among discretionary customers. Completing the plan review or plan check process by the target date set by the City was also consistently among the performance dimensions for which the Partners received the lowest satisfaction ratings. It is important to note, however, that the ability of the Partners to meet the original schedule is based, in part, on whether customers provide documents in a timely manner and the integrity of the plans they submit.

**Project Time Lines/Timeliness** The adage "time is money" applies in force to customers of the Development Services Program. Accordingly, customers want the Partners to prepare and adhere to reasonable and quantifiable time lines. Staff actions that delay projects—such as miscommunication, inconsistencies and late hits—are especially frustrating for customers, as are processes that are unnecessarily bureaucratic and time-consuming.

Although ministerial customers recognized statistically significant improvement in the Partners' performance with respect to wait times at the permit counter, the timing of plan correction requests, and completing plan review according to the agreed-upon target date, the study clearly indicates that customers would continue to appreciate anything the Partners' can do to further clarify and simplify the permitting process and thereby reduce the time it takes to complete their projects. This is especially true for discretionary customers during the plan review stage and those who have projects that require review by the Public Works Department. In addition to streamlining the process were possible, many of the suggested improvements noted above in the areas of communication, consistency, as well as accountability—if taken—will positively impact the efficiency and timeliness of the permitting process.



## PROCESS, ROLE & PROJECT TYPE

One of the challenges to gauging customer satisfaction that is somewhat unique to the Development Services Program is that, for any given project, the Partners often interact with not one, but multiple customers who play different roles on a project (e.g., homeowner, architect and contractor). Moreover, customers vary in their level of involvement in a project. Whereas some customers are involved in each of the key stages of a project, others may be personally involved in just one stage, such as building inspection. The types of projects also vary substantially.

**INVOLVEMENT IN PROCESS** To understand the extent of customer involvement in each of the key stages in a project, as well as have the ability to tailor the interview to a customer's individual experience with the Partners, the first substantive question of the survey asked a respondent to identify which stages they were *personally* involved in during their most recent project. For ministerial customers, the three stages were described as permit application and issuance, plan check, and inspection. For discretionary customers, the stages were described as permit application, plan review, and public hearing.

**Question SC3: Ministerial & Discretionary** *For your most recent (discretionary) project, were you personally involved in the: \_\_\_\_\_ stage of the project?*

**FIGURE 1 INVOLVEMENT IN STAGES OF PROJECT: MINISTERIAL**

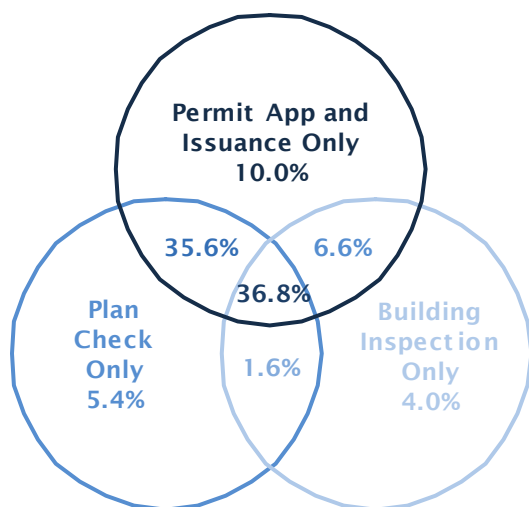


Figure 1 is a Venn diagram that displays the distribution of customers by project stage among those surveyed regarding their most recent ministerial project. Overall, 37% of ministerial customers surveyed were personally involved in all three stages of the project, and an additional 44% of customers were involved in two of the three stages. A minority of customers (19%) were personally involved in just one of the key stages on their most recent project.

For the interested reader, Table 2 shows how involvement by stage varied according to the number of projects a customer was associated with in the year prior to the interview.

**TABLE 2 INVOLVEMENT IN STAGES OF PROJECT BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS: MINISTERIAL**

	Overall	Number of Projects in Past 12 Months				
		1	2 to 3	4 to 5	6 to 10	11 or more
Permit app & issuance only	10%	15%	8%	5%	2%	13%
Plan check only	5%	2%	6%	9%	8%	7%
Building inspection only	4%	6%	5%	0%	5%	2%
Permit app & issuance + Plan check	36%	32%	35%	41%	40%	33%
Permit app & issuance + Bldg inspection	7%	7%	6%	4%	5%	11%
Plan check + Bldg inspection	2%	2%	1%	0%	4%	4%
All three stages	37%	35%	40%	41%	36%	30%

**FIGURE 2 INVOLVEMENT IN STAGES OF PROJECT: DISCRETIONARY**

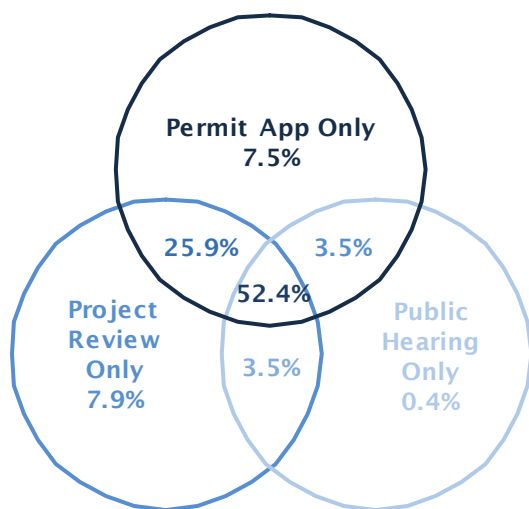


Figure 2 provides a similar Venn diagram for discretionary customers. Overall, 52% of discretionary customers surveyed were personally involved in all three stages of their most recent project, and an additional 33% of customers were involved in two of the three stages. Just 16% of discretionary customers were personally involved in only one of the key stages on their most recent project.

Table 3 displays the distribution of involvement by stage among discretionary customers according to the number of projects they were associated with in the year prior to the interview.

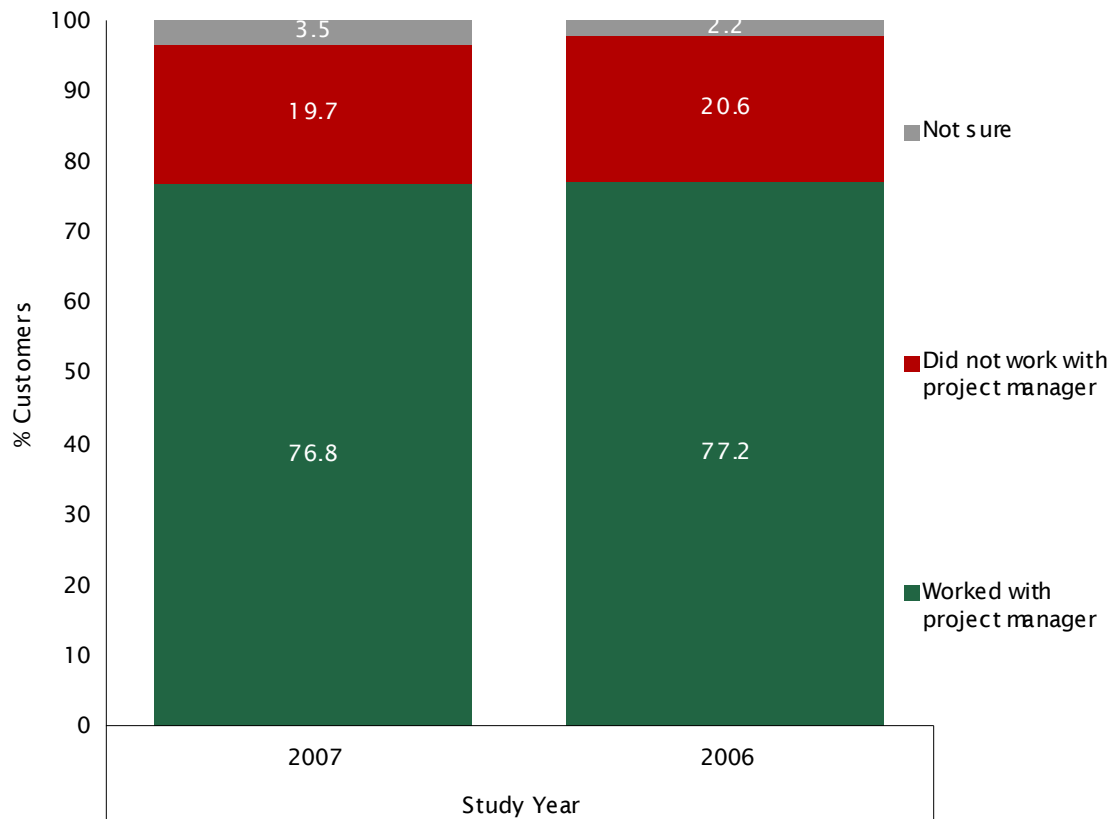
**TABLE 3 INVOLVEMENT IN STAGES OF PROJECT BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS: DISCRETIONARY**

	Overall	Number of Projects in Past 12 Months			
		1	2 to 3	4 to 5	6 or more
Permit app only	7%	8%	8%	3%	8%
Plan review only	8%	4%	3%	9%	20%
Public hearing only	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Permit app + Project review	26%	29%	22%	28%	23%
Permit app + Public hearing	4%	4%	5%	0%	3%
Project review + Public hearing	4%	3%	2%	3%	8%
All three stages	51%	49%	59%	56%	40%

**WORK WITH PROJECT MANAGER?** Discretionary projects are often assigned a Project Manager to serve as a single point-of-contact for the customer. As shown in Figure 3 on the next page, 77% of discretionary customers in 2007 reported that they personally worked with a Project Manager assigned by the City on their most recent project. This finding is nearly identical to that recorded in the 2006 study, which is also shown in Figure 3 for comparison purposes.

**Question SC4: Discretionary** *Did you personally work with a Project Manager assigned by the City to the project?*

**FIGURE 3 WORKED WITH PROJECT MANAGER BY STUDY YEAR**

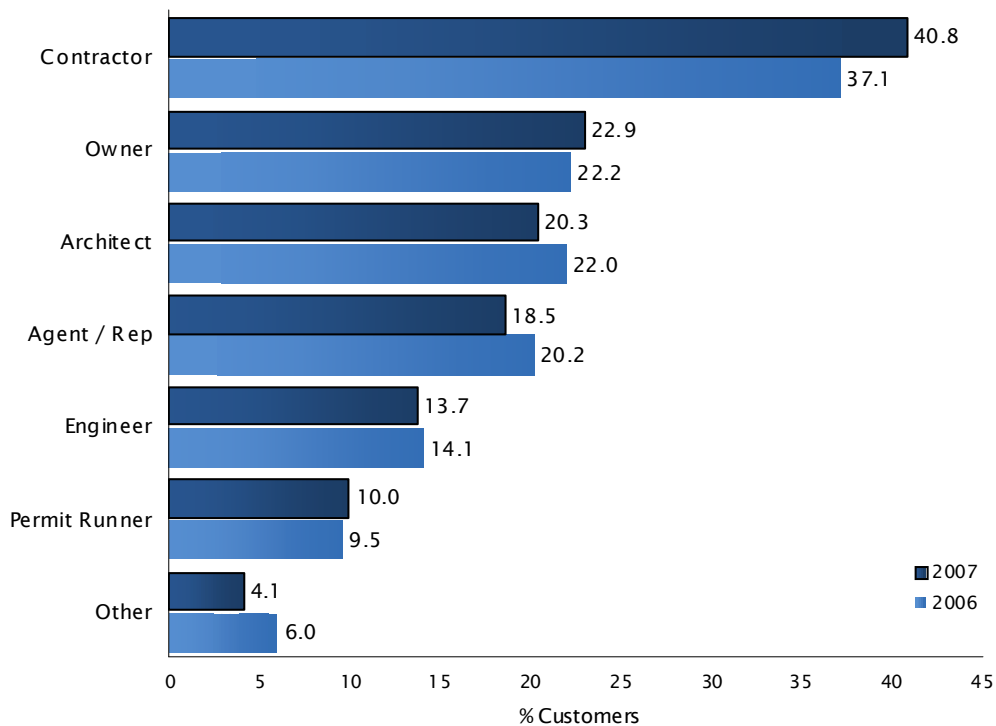


**CUSTOMER ROLE** Customers were next presented with the list of roles in Figure 4 and asked to indicate which best describes their role on their most recent project with the City of San José. The results for 2006 (light blue bars) are shown alongside those from the 2007 study for comparison. Among ministerial customers in 2007, 41% selected contractor, 23% mentioned owner, 20% mentioned architect, and 19% chose agent or representative. Approximately 14% described their role as engineer, 10% as permit runner, and 4% indicated that their role was something ‘other’ than the options previously mentioned. There were no statistically significant changes in the role descriptions between 2006 and 2007.

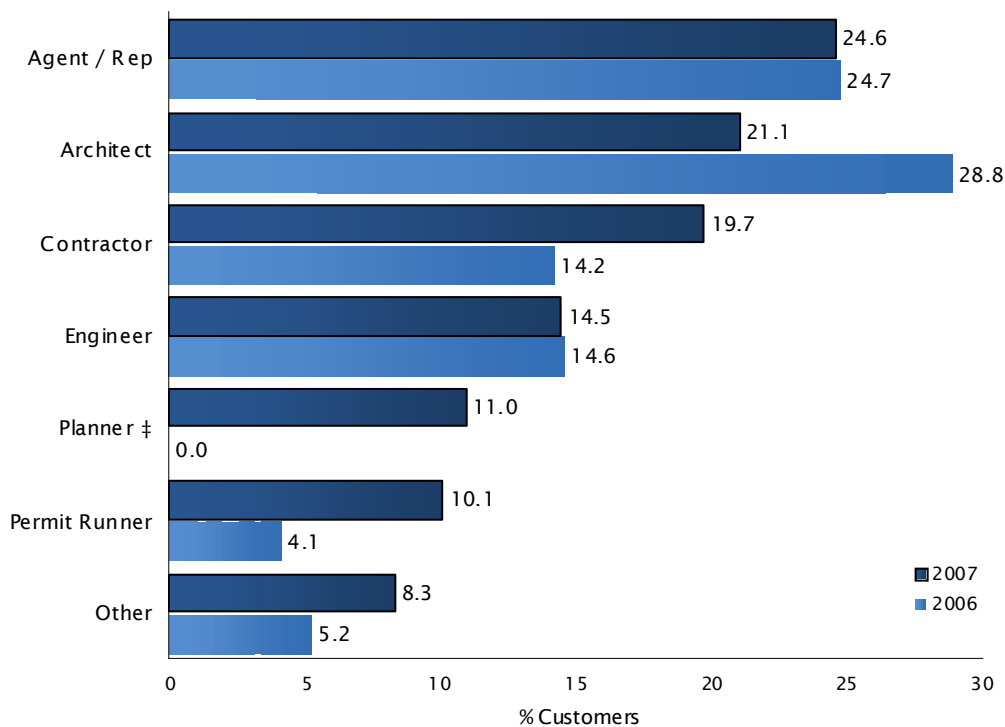
The patterns were somewhat different among discretionary customers (see Figure 5). The most commonly selected role in 2007 was agent or representative (25%), followed by architect (21%), and contractor (20%). Fourteen percent (14%) described their role as engineer, 11% as planner, 10% served as a permit runner, and 8% indicated that their role was something other than the previously mentioned options. Note that the “planner” category was not offered as an option in 2006.

**Question 1: Ministerial & Discretionary** Which of the following best describes your role on this project?

**FIGURE 4 ROLE WITH PROJECT BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**



**FIGURE 5 ROLE WITH PROJECT BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

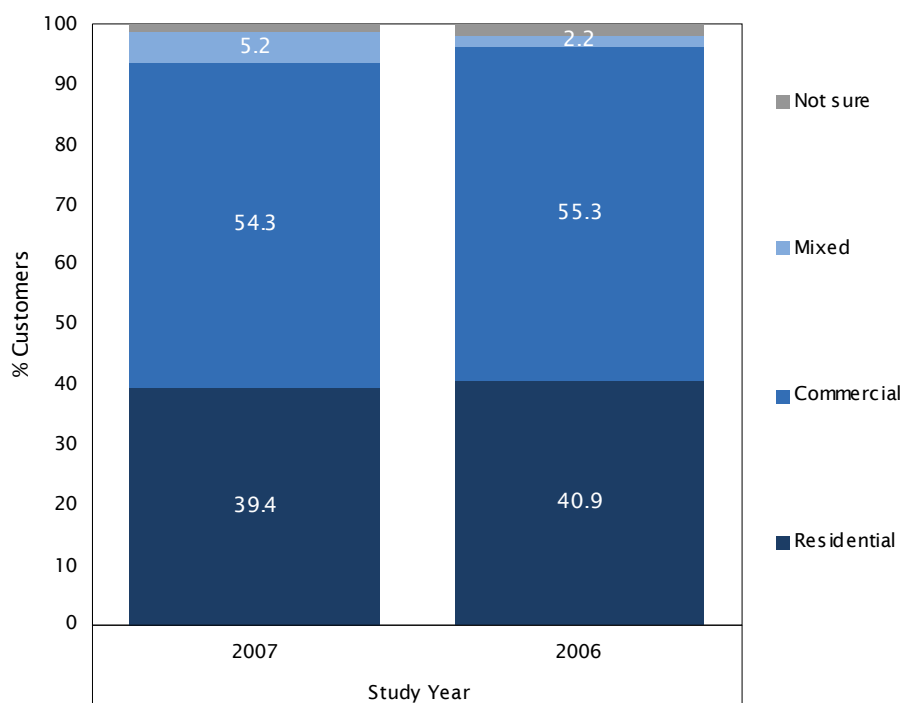


‡ Planner category not offered in 2006.

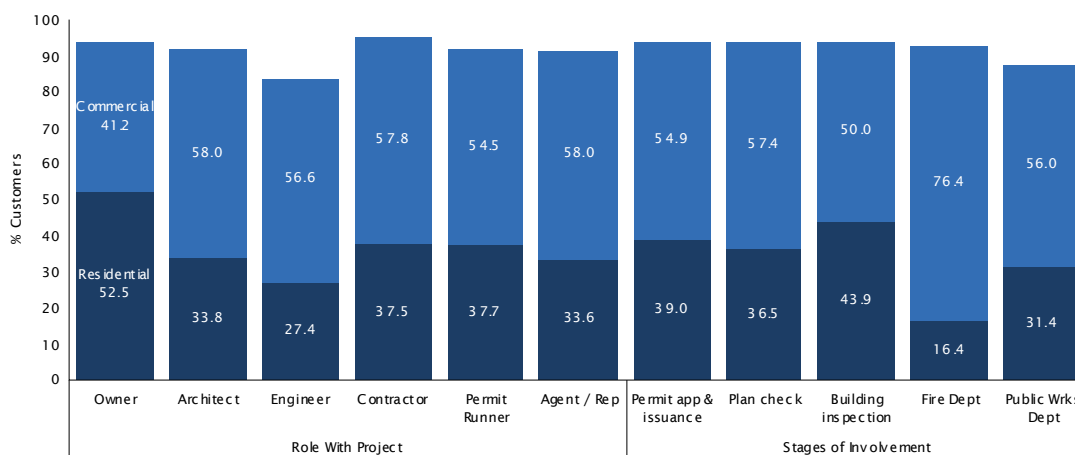
**PROJECT TYPE** Having measured a customer's involvement in the permitting process on their most recent project, as well as their role, the final questions in this series addressed the type of project they worked on most recently with the City. Among ministerial customers in 2007, 54% described their most recent project as commercial, 39% described it as residential in nature, 5% described it as mixed-use, and 1% were not sure (Figure 6). These results are similar to those found in 2006. Figure 7 displays how the nature of their most recent project varied by customer role and stages of involvement. When compared to their respective ministerial counterparts, owners and those involved with building inspections were substantially more likely to describe their most recent project as residential in nature.

**Question 2: Ministerial & Discretionary** *Was your most recent project for a residential property, a commercial property, or a mixed use property?*

**FIGURE 6 PROPERTY TYPE BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**



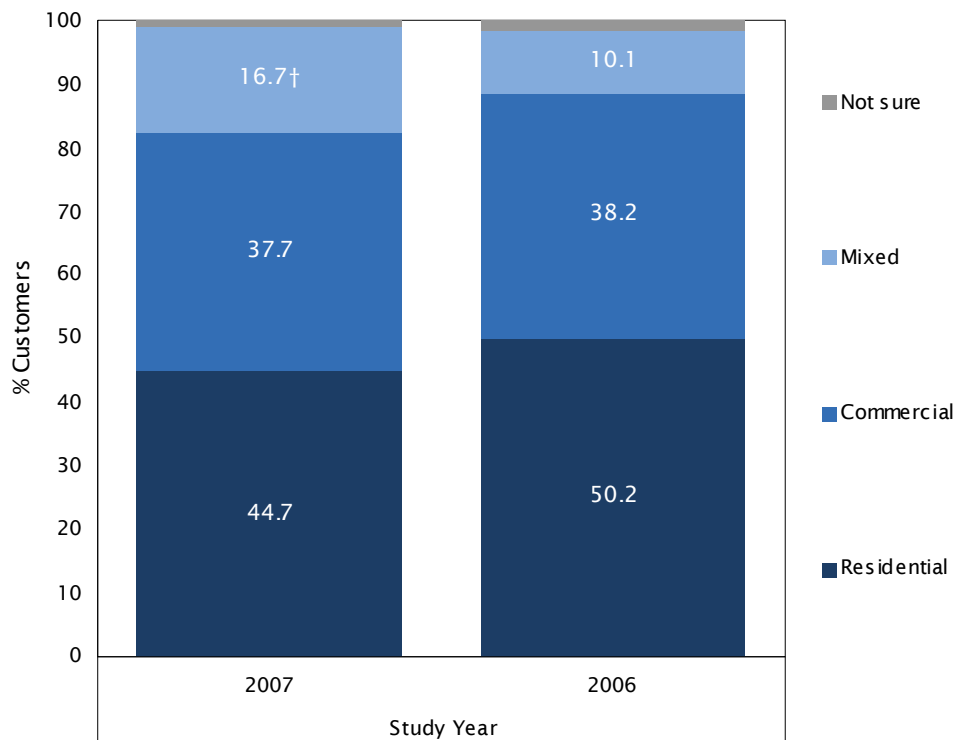
**FIGURE 7 PROPERTY TYPE BY ROLE WITH PROJECT & NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS: MINISTERIAL**



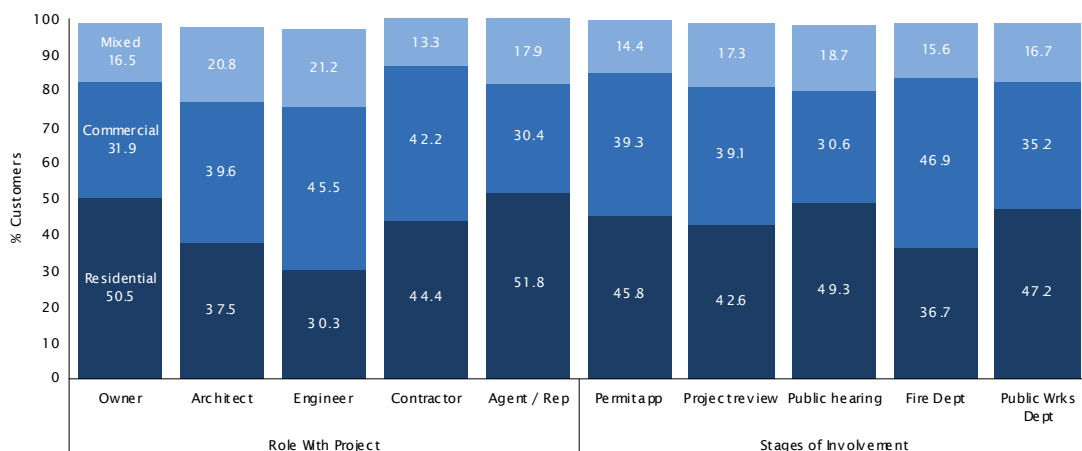
Unlike their ministerial counterparts, discretionary customers were most likely to describe their most recent project as residential (45%). Approximately 38% described their project as commercial, 17% indicated that it was a mixed-use project, and 1% were not sure (Figure 8). When compared to the 2006 findings, the proportion of discretionary customers who reported that their most recent project was mixed-use increased significantly.

When compared their respective discretionary counterparts, owners, agents/representatives, and those who participated in the public hearing in 2007 were the most likely to describe their most recent project with the City as residential in nature (see Figure 9).

**FIGURE 8 PROPERTY TYPE BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**



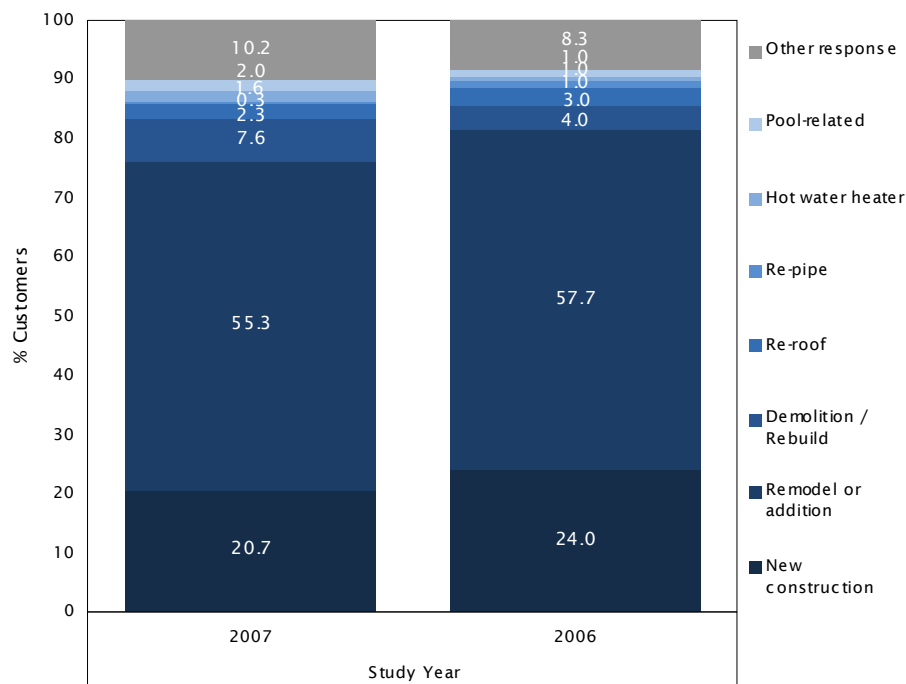
**FIGURE 9 PROPERTY TYPE BY ROLE WITH PROJECT & STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT: DISCRETIONARY**



**NATURE OF MINISTERIAL PROJECT** Ministerial customers were subsequently asked to describe the nature of their project using the categories shown in Figure 10 for residential projects or Figure 11 for commercial projects. The dominant category among residential projects in 2007 was remodel or addition (55%), followed by new construction (21%). There were no statistically significant changes between 2006 and 2007 with respect to how ministerial customers described the nature of their project (Figure 10), although it is worth noting that customers who interacted with the Fire Department and/or Public Works Department were much more likely to describe their projects as new construction (see Table 4).

**Question 3: Ministerial** Which of the following best describes the nature of your project?

**FIGURE 10 NATURE OF RESIDENTIAL PROJECT BY STUDY YEAR**



**TABLE 4 NATURE OF RESIDENTIAL PROJECT BY STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT**

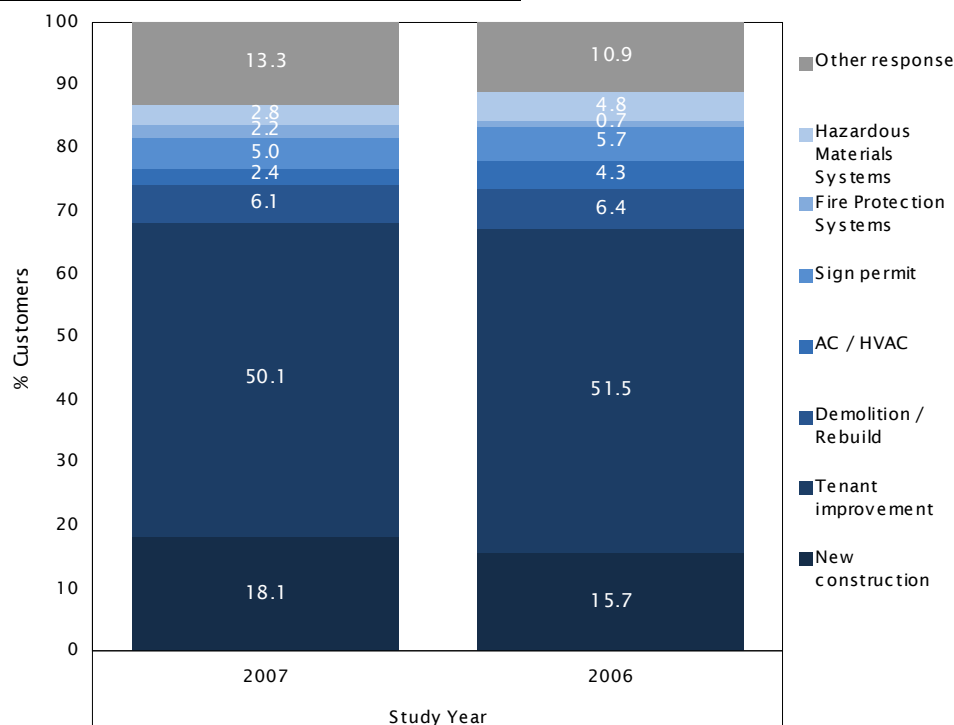
	Stages of Involvement				
	Permit app & issuance	Plan check	Building inspection	Fire Dept	Public Wrks Dept
New construction	18.7	22.3	16.9	61.5	54.0
Remodel or addition	56.3	60.3	59.6	26.9	26.0
Demolition / Rebuild	6.7	7.6	7.2	5.8	6.0
Re-roof	2.6	0.9	3.0	0.0	0.0
Re-pipe	0.4	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0
Hot water heater	1.5	0.4	2.4	0.0	0.0
Pool-related	2.2	1.8	1.8	0.0	2.0
Other response	11.6	6.7	8.4	5.8	12.0

For commercial projects, half of ministerial customers described the project as a tenant improvement (50%) in 2007, whereas 18% selected new construction (Figure 11). Again, the 2007 findings are statistically similar to those recorded in 2006. When compared to their respective

counterparts, ministerial customers with commercial or mixed-use projects who interacted with the Public Works Department were substantially more likely to describe their project as new construction (see Table 5).

**Question 4: Ministerial** Which of the following best describes the nature of your project?

**FIGURE 11 NATURE OF COMMERCIAL OR MIXED-USE PROJECT BY STUDY YEAR**



**TABLE 5 NATURE OF COMMERCIAL OR MIXED-USE PROJECT BY STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT**

	Stages of Involvement				
	Permit app & issuance	Plan check	Building inspection	Fire Dept	Public Wrks Dept
New construction	16.7	17.7	20.7	18.3	36.5
Tenant improvement	51.1	52.9	46.2	58.4	39.4
Demolition / Rebuild	5.6	6.3	6.3	5.3	8.7
AC / HVAC	2.4	2.1	2.4	1.9	1.9
Sign permit	5.3	4.9	4.3	0.4	1.0
Fire Protection Systems	2.4	2.1	1.9	2.3	1.0
Hazardous Materials Systems	2.7	2.9	4.3	4.2	0.0
Other response	13.8	11.2	13.9	9.2	11.5



## OVERALL SATISFACTION

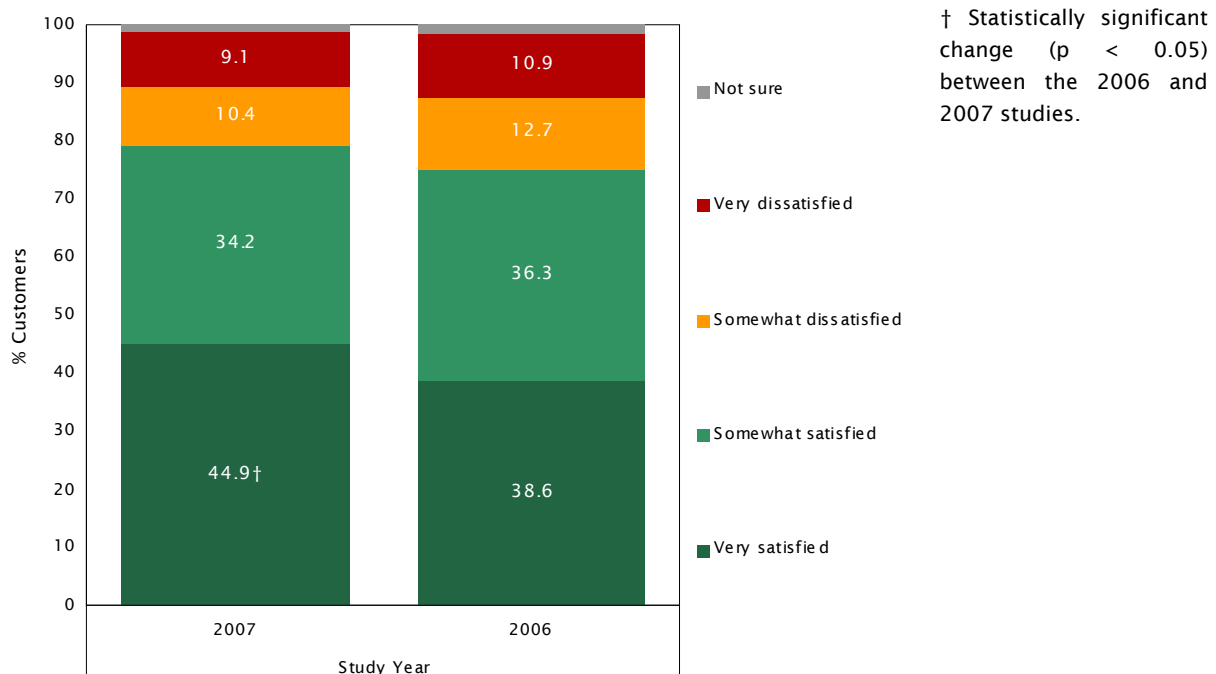
Having profiled a respondent's involvement in their most recent project with the City, the survey next instructed the customer to focus on this same project when answering the remaining questions in the survey. This approach was used to ensure that the survey results reflect customers' most recent—rather than most memorable—experiences with the City, thereby providing timely feedback about the Partners' *current* performance.<sup>4</sup>

All respondents were then asked to indicate if, overall, they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the service they received from the City of San José on their most recent project. Because this question does not reference a specific aspect of the project and requested that the respondent consider the City's performance in general, the findings of this question may be regarded as an *overall performance rating* for the Development Services Program.

**MINISTERIAL** Figure 12 presents the Partners' overall performance rating among ministerial customers in 2007 and 2006. Overall, nearly four out of five customers (79%) in 2007 indicated that they were either very (45%) or somewhat (34%) satisfied with the service that they received from the City in 2007. Twenty percent (20%) of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with the Partners' performance, and 1% were unsure. When compared to 2006, the *intensity* of satisfaction among ministerial customers increased significantly, as the percentage who stated that they were very satisfied increased from 39% to 45%.

**Question 5: Ministerial** *Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the service that you received from the City of San José on this project?*

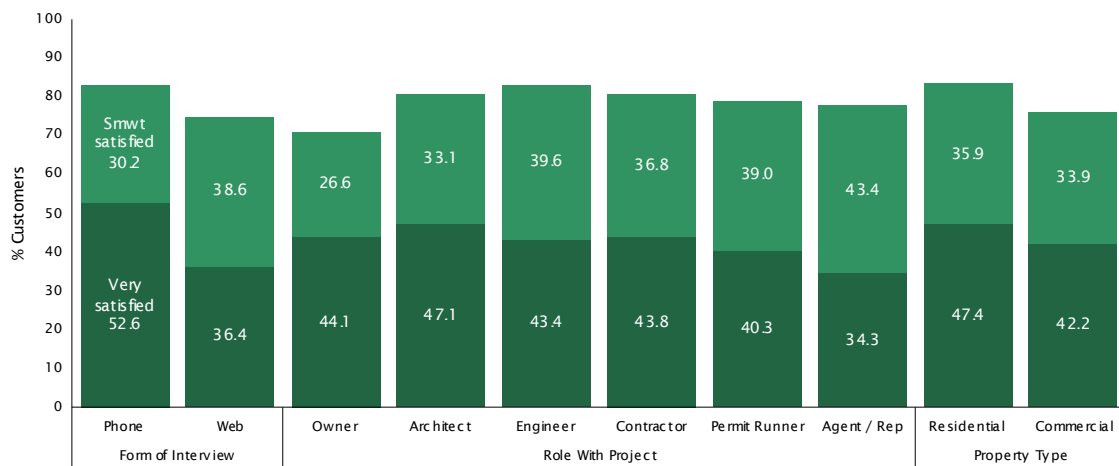
FIGURE 12 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL



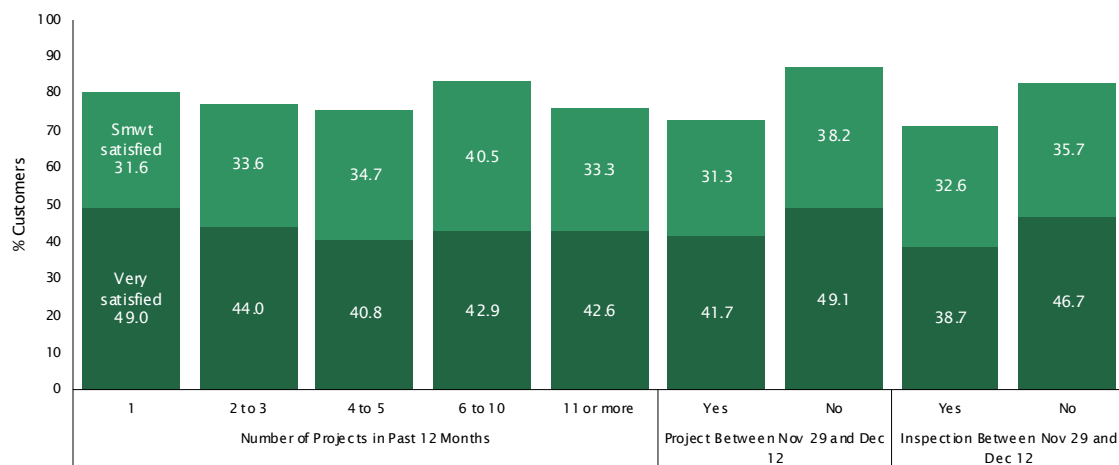
4. Without this instruction, some customers would likely comment on their most memorable experiences with the City, which could be on projects that occurred several years ago.

The following figures display how overall satisfaction with the Partners' performance varied among ministerial customers in 2007 by the form of interview, their role in the project, property type, the number of projects they were involved with in the City of San José in 2007, whether they had a project active during the building inspectors' strike (Nov. 29-Dec.12), whether they had or tried to schedule an inspection during the building inspectors' strike, their involvement in various stages of their most recent project, and whether they had visited the Development Services website in the 12 months preceding the interview. Although there were certainly some differences across customer subgroups (e.g., those who had a project active, a scheduled inspection, or tried to schedule an inspection during the building inspectors' strike being less satisfied than their counterparts) the most striking pattern in each of the figures is the relative consistency of opinion.<sup>5</sup>

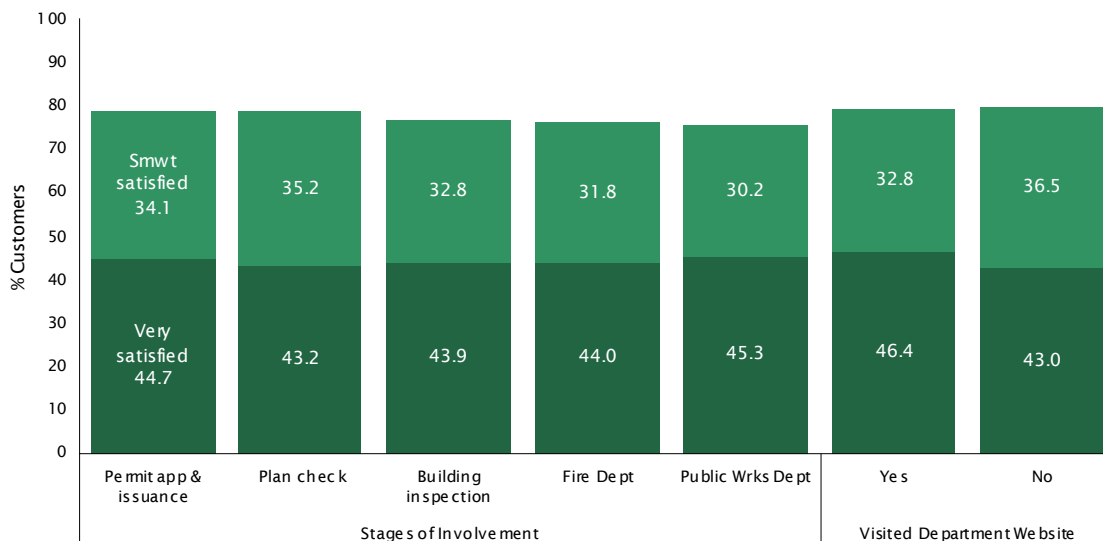
**FIGURE 13 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY FORM OF INTERVIEW, ROLE WITH PROJECT & PROPERTY TYPE: MINISTERIAL**



**FIGURE 14 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS, PROJECT BETWEEN NOV 29 AND DEC 12 & INSPECTION BETWEEN NOV 29 AND DEC 12: MINISTERIAL**

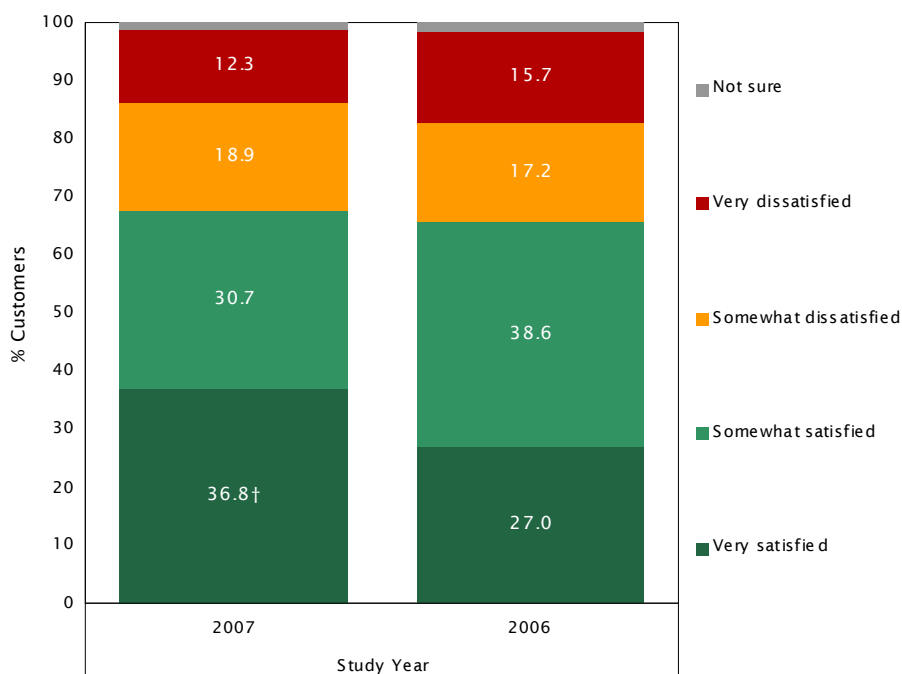


5. The lower levels of satisfaction among those who completed online is a proxy for timing. The website survey was made available prior to the telephone interview, and those customers who are displeased with the Department's performance tend to respond more quickly to the invitation to provide feedback about the Department.

**FIGURE 15 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT& VISITED DEPARTMENT WEBSITE: MINISTERIAL**

**DISCRETIONARY** Figure 16 presents the Partners' overall performance rating among discretionary customers in 2007 and 2006 for comparison. More than two-thirds of respondents (68%) indicated that they were either very (37%) or somewhat (31%) satisfied with the service that they received on their most recent project in 2007. Less than one-third (31%) of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with the Partners' performance, and approximately 1% were unsure.

**Question 3: Discretionary** Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the service that you received from the City of San José on this project?

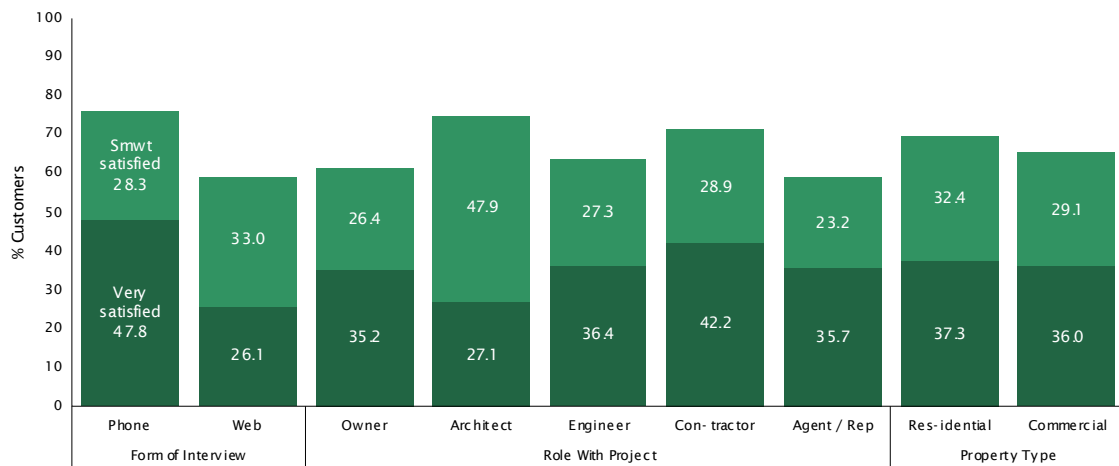
**FIGURE 16 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

Like their ministerial counterparts, the *intensity* of satisfaction among discretionary customers increased significantly in the past year, as the percentage who stated that they were very satisfied increased from 27% to 37%.

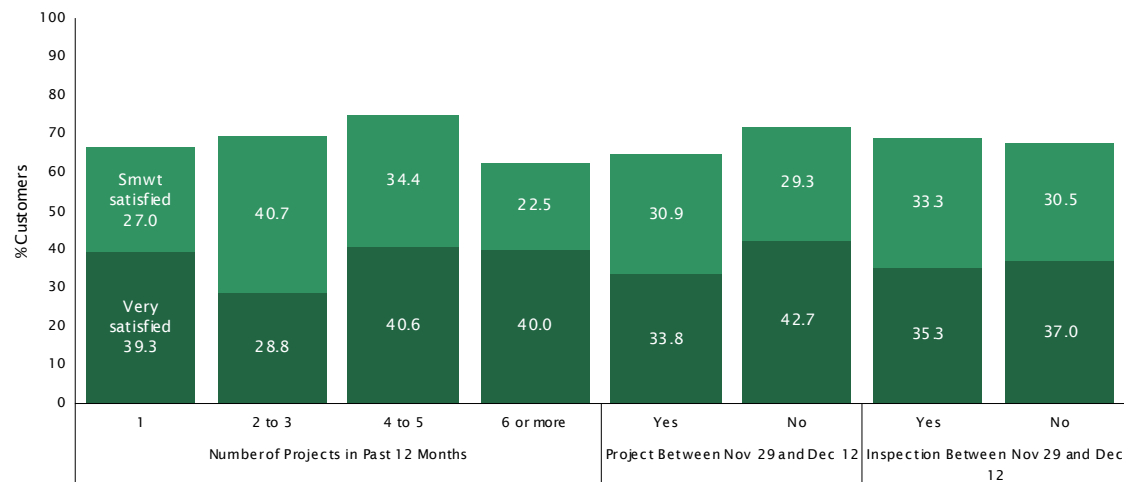
† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2006 and 2007 studies.

Whereas overall satisfaction levels were generally similar across subgroups of ministerial customers (see Figures 13-15), opinions varied more among some subgroups of discretionary customers (see Figures 17-19). When compared to their respective counterparts, those who participated in the survey via telephone, architects, customers who had four to five projects in the City in the past year, those who did not have a project active during the building inspectors' strike, those who did not work with a Project Manager, and those who had not visited the Development Services website in the 12 months preceding the interview were the most likely to report being satisfied.

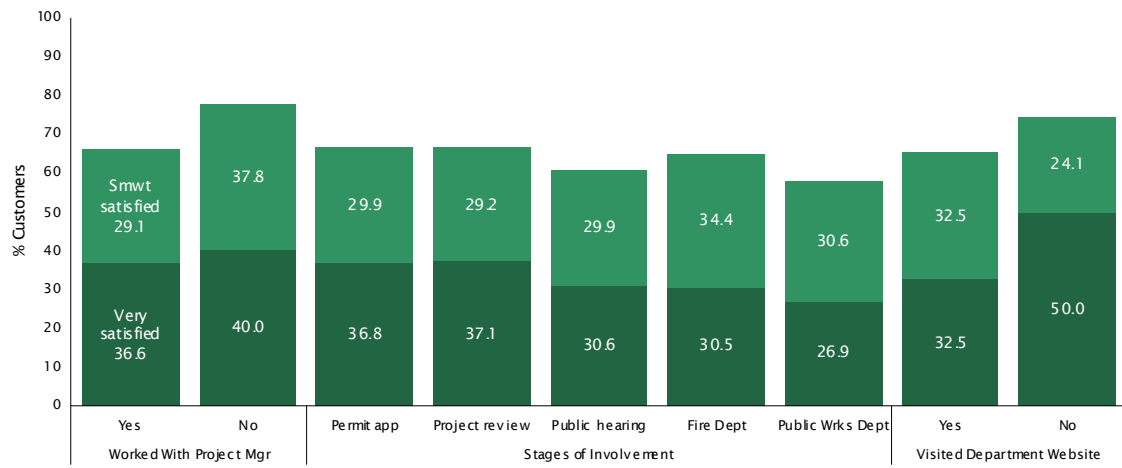
**FIGURE 17 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY FORM OF INTERVIEW, ROLE WITH PROJECT & PROPERTY TYPE: DISCRETIONARY**



**FIGURE 18 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS, PROJECT BETWEEN NOV 29 AND DEC 12 & INSPECTION BETWEEN NOV 29 AND DEC 12: DISCRETIONARY**



**FIGURE 19 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY WORKED WITH PROJECT MANAGER, STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT & VISITED DEPARTMENT WEBSITE: DISCRETIONARY**



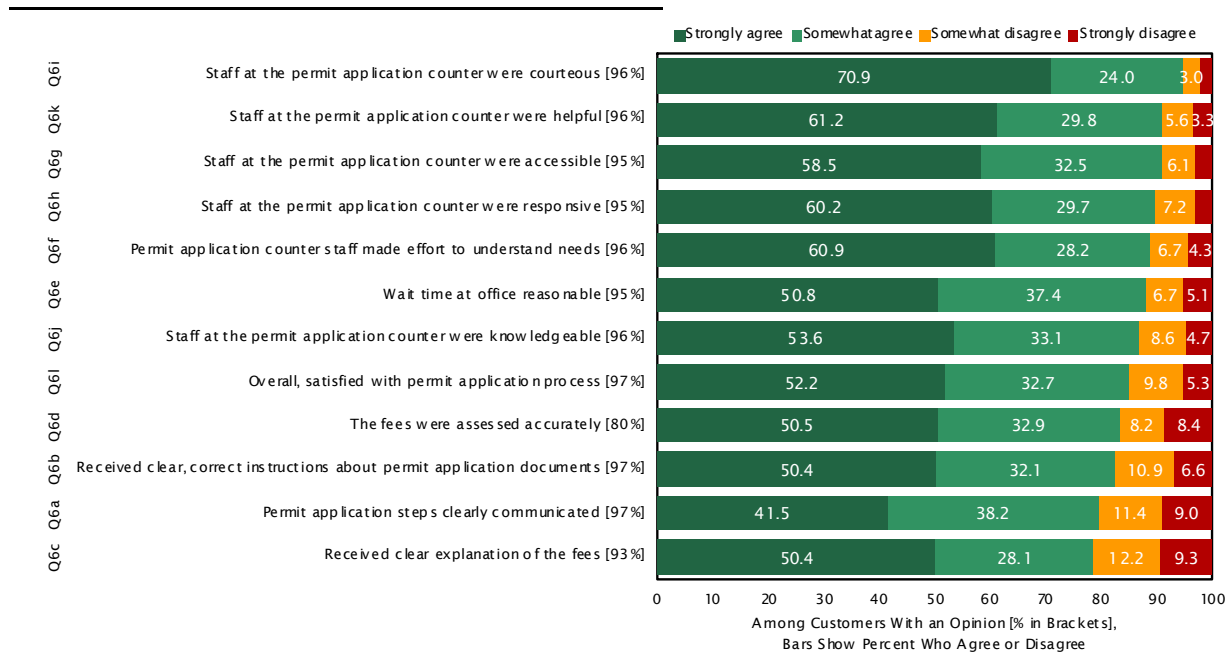
## PERMIT APPLICATION & ISSUANCE

Whereas the previous section addressed the Partners' *overall* performance, at this point the survey narrowed to focus on *specific* aspects of the Partners' performance, such as responsiveness, clarity of communication, and accuracy. Because customers varied in their level of involvement on their most recent project, and the Partners' performance can fluctuate across stages of a project, the questions were divided into the three key stages discussed previously for ministerial and discretionary projects, respectively. Only customers who indicated they were personally involved in a stage were administered questions related to the stage. Questions relating to the permit application and issuance stage are presented in this section of the report. Questions relating to plan check/review, inspections, and public hearings are discussed in later sections.

**MINISTERIAL** Overall, 89% of ministerial customers indicated that they were personally involved in the permit application and issuance stage on their most recent project. Question 6 was designed to measure the Partners' performance in meeting these customers' needs during said stage. For each of the 12 statements shown to the left of Figure 20 that comment on a specific aspect of the Partners' performance, respondents were simply asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement. The higher the level of agreement, the more favorable a customer's opinion of the Partners' performance.

**Question 6: Ministerial** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the Building permit application and issuance stage of the process. I'd like you to tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.*

**FIGURE 20 AGREEMENT WITH PERMIT APPLICATION & ISSUANCE STATEMENTS: MINISTERIAL<sup>6</sup>**



6. The percentage who held an opinion for each statement is shown to the right of the statement in brackets. The percentages shown in the bars are among those with an opinion, which allows for a more direct and meaningful comparison of responses across the statements tested. Additionally, because of size constraints of the charts, a number is not shown within bars that represent less than 3% of respondents. These conventions are used throughout this report for all figures that show levels of agreement in percentage form.

Overall, more than 85% of ministerial customers agreed that staff at the permit counter were courteous (95%), accessible (91%), helpful (91%), responsive (90%), knowledgeable (87%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (89%). The vast majority of ministerial customers also agreed that they received a clear explanation of the fees, taxes and deposits (79%), that the fees and taxes were assessed accurately (84%), and that the wait time at the permit counter before being assisted by staff was reasonable (88%). Ministerial customers were also generally satisfied with staff's efforts to communicate the process and steps needed to obtain a permit (80%), and provide clear, correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit (83%). Overall, 85% of ministerial customers in 2007 indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the permit application stage on their most recent project.

Table 6 shows the percentage of ministerial customers who agreed with each performance statement tested during the 2007 and 2006 surveys, respectively, along with the percentage change in agreement between 2006 and 2007. When compared to 2006, there were statistically significant increases (improvements) in 2007 in nine of the performance dimensions tested, and no statistically significant decreases.

**TABLE 6 AGREEMENT WITH PERMIT APPLICATION & ISSUANCE STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
Staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	86.6	80.4	+6.3†
Overall, satisfied with permit application process	84.9	78.8	+6.1†
Permit application steps clearly communicated	79.6	74.0	+5.6†
Staff at the permit application counter were helpful	91.0	85.5	+5.6†
Permit application counter staff made effort to understand needs	89.0	83.9	+5.1†
Received clear, correct instructions about permit application documents	82.5	77.4	+5.0†
Wait time at office reasonable	88.2	83.3	+4.9†
Staff at the permit application counter were accessible	91.0	86.1	+4.9†
Staff at the permit application counter were responsive	89.9	85.1	+4.8†
Staff at the permit application counter were courteous	94.8	92.7	+2.1
Received clear explanation of the fees	78.5	79.9	-1.4
The fees were assessed accurately	83.5	86.2	-2.8

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2006 and 2007 studies.

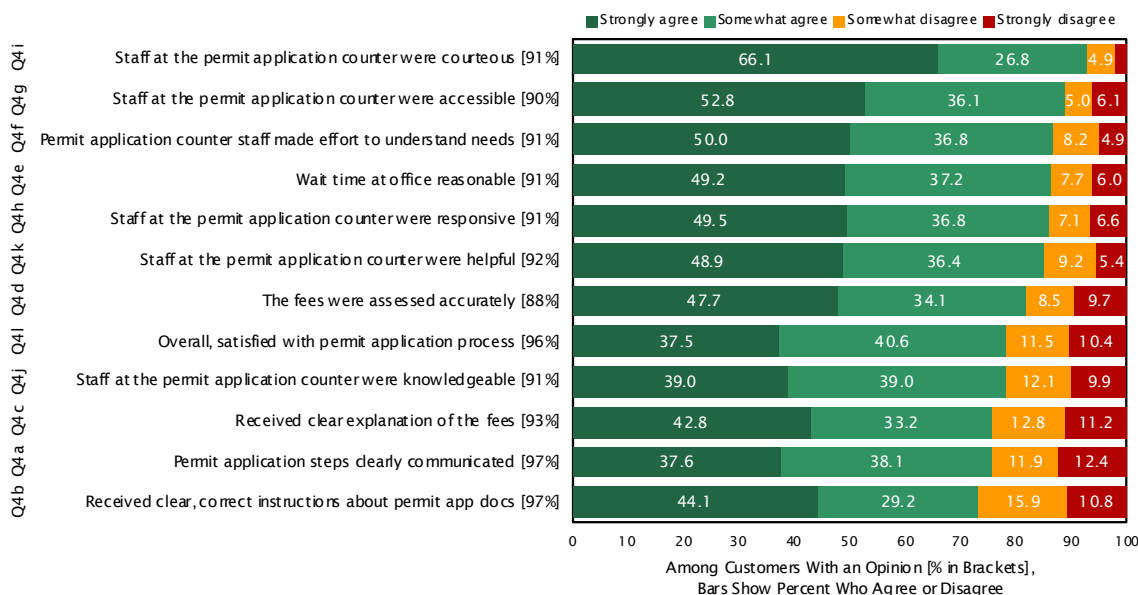
**RATINGS BY MINISTERIAL SUBGROUP** For the interested reader, Table 7 displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 6 for the permit application stage varied according to customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 5 for ministerial). The table divides those who were satisfied with the Partners' overall performance into one group, and the minority of customers who were dissatisfied into a second group. It also displays the difference between the two groups in the percentage of customers who agreed with each statement tested in Question 6 (far right column). For most of the performance-related statements tested, there was a sizeable difference—thus indicating that customers who were disappointed with the Partners' overall performance were much more likely to also be less pleased (as a group) with specific performance criteria at the permit application stage. Staff courteousness was a notable exception to this pattern.

**TABLE 7 AGREEMENT WITH PERMIT APPLICATION & ISSUANCE STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: MINISTERIAL**

	Overall Satisfaction (Q5)		Difference Between Groups
	Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
Overall, satisfied with permit application process	95.6	41.1	54.5
Received clear, correct instructions about permit application documents	91.6	47.4	44.2
Permit application steps clearly communicated	88.4	45.9	42.5
Staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	94.2	57.5	36.7
Staff at the permit application counter were helpful	98.3	62.9	35.4
Permit application counter staff made effort to understand customer needs	95.9	63.2	32.8
Received clear explanation of the fees	85.3	53.4	31.9
Staff at the permit application counter were responsive	95.9	65.9	30.0
The fees were assessed accurately	89.8	60.3	29.4
Staff at the permit application counter were accessible	95.6	73.3	22.3
Wait time at office reasonable	92.2	72.0	20.2
Staff at the permit application counter were courteous	97.5	85.7	11.8

**DISCRETIONARY** Overall, 89% of discretionary customers indicated that they were personally involved in the permit application stage on their most recent project. In the same manner described previously for ministerial projects, customers with discretionary projects were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements regarding various aspects of the Partners' performance on their most recent project during the permit application stage. The statements tested, as well as the results for each statement, are shown in Figure 21.

**Question 4: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about submitting a Planning permit application during the entitlement stage of the process. I'd like you to tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 21 AGREEMENT WITH PERMIT APPLICATION STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**




Overall, at least 75% of discretionary customers agreed that staff at the permit counter were courteous (93%), accessible (89%), helpful (85%), responsive (86%), knowledgeable (78%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (87%). More than 80% of discretionary customers also agreed that the wait time at the permit counter before being assisted by staff was reasonable (86%), and that the fees were assessed accurately (82%). When compared to the other performance dimensions tested, communication received the lowest satisfaction scores—including communicating the process and steps needed to obtain a permit (76%), providing clear, correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit (73%), and providing a clear explanation of the fees (76%). Overall, 78% of discretionary customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the permit application stage on their most recent project.

When compared to 2006, there were no statistically significant changes in the percentage of discretionary customers who agreed with each of the performance-related statements that pertained to the permit application stage (see Table 8).

**TABLE 8 AGREEMENT WITH PERMIT APPLICATION STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
Received clear explanation of the fees	75.9	71.3	+4.6
Wait time at office reasonable	86.3	85.3	+1.0
Received clear, correct instructions about permit app docs	73.3	73.2	+0.2
The fees were assessed accurately	81.8	82.1	-0.2
Staff at the permit application counter were responsive	86.3	87.1	-0.8
Permit application counter staff made effort to understand needs	86.8	87.9	-1.1
Permit application steps clearly communicated	75.8	76.9	-1.1
Staff at the permit application counter were accessible	88.9	90.0	-1.1
Staff at the permit application counter were helpful	85.3	86.7	-1.3
Staff at the permit application counter were courteous	92.9	95.8	-2.9
Overall, satisfied with permit application process	78.1	81.3	-3.1
Staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	78.0	82.6	-4.6

**RATINGS BY DISCRETIONARY SUBGROUP** In a manner identical to Table 7 on page 32, Table 9 displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 4 for the permit application stage varied according to customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 3 for discretionary customers). Once again, the results indicate that the minority of customers who were dissatisfied with the Partners' overall performance were also much more likely than their counterparts to be disappointed with the Partners' performance on each of the dimensions tested for the permit application process. The exceptions to this pattern were found with respect to staff courteousness and perceptions of the wait time at the permit counter.

**TABLE 9 AGREEMENT WITH PERMIT APPLICATION STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: DISCRETIONARY**

	Overall Satisfaction (Q3)		Difference Between Groups
	Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
Overall, satisfied with permit application process	94.7	43.3	51.3
Staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	92.7	46.6	46.1
Permit application steps clearly communicated	90.0	47.6	42.4
Received clear, correct instructions about permit application documents	84.8	50.0	34.8
Staff at the permit application counter were responsive	95.9	65.5	30.4
Staff at the permit application counter were helpful	94.4	65.5	28.9
Permit application counter staff made effort to understand customer needs	95.9	67.2	28.7
Received clear explanation of the fees	84.4	56.9	27.5
The fees were assessed accurately	89.1	66.1	23.0
Staff at the permit application counter were accessible	95.9	74.1	21.7
Staff at the permit application counter were courteous	98.4	81.4	17.0
Wait time at office reasonable	91.1	76.3	14.8

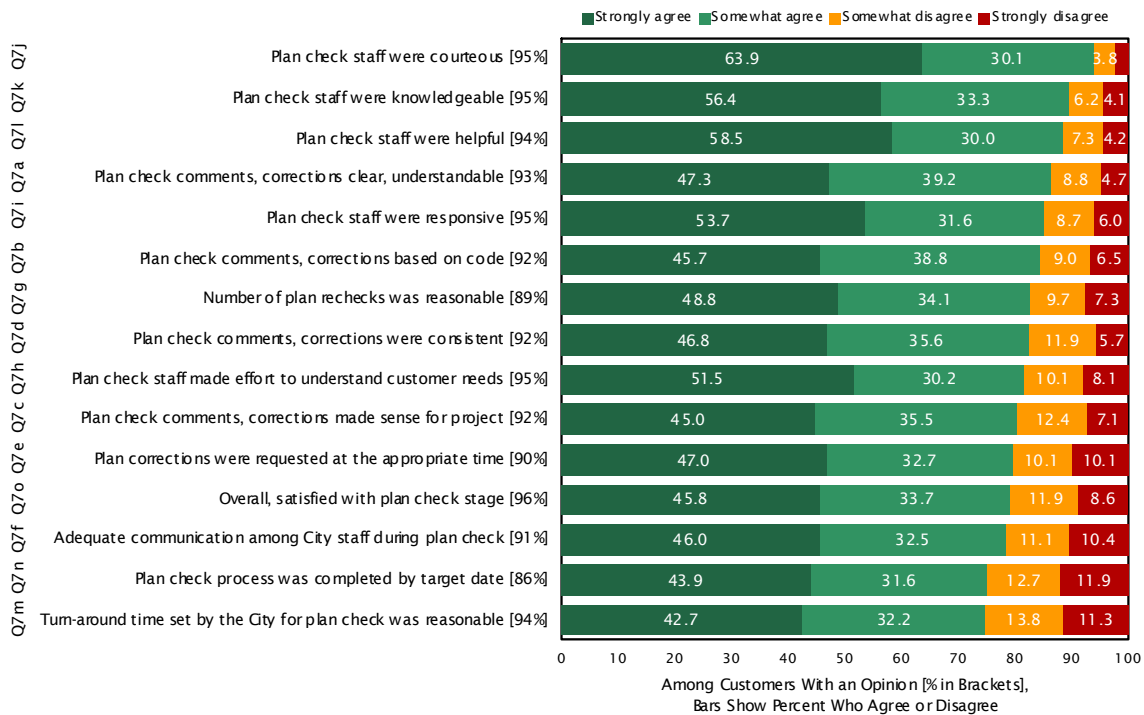
## PLAN CHECK & PLAN REVIEW

Once customers have successfully completed the permit application stage, a project enters the plan check (ministerial) or plan review (discretionary) stage. At this stage, plans submitted in connection with the permit application are reviewed by plan check staff for compliance with State- and City-adopted codes and regulations. Any necessary changes are noted in a plan check correction list and must be corrected by the customer prior to permit issuance. Overall, 79% of ministerial customers and 90% of discretionary customers reported they were *personally* involved in the plan check or plan review stage, respectively.

**MINISTERIAL** Ministerial customers' satisfaction with the Partners' performance during the plan check stage was measured in the same manner described previously for the permit application stage. For each of the performance-related statements paraphrased in Figure 22, respondents were simply asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement based on their most recent experience with the City.

**Question 7: Ministerial** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the Building plan check process. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 22 AGREEMENT WITH PLAN CHECK STATEMENTS: MINISTERIAL**



Overall, at least 80% of ministerial customers agreed that plan check staff were courteous (94%), knowledgeable (90%), helpful (89%), responsive (85%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (82%). A similarly high percentage of ministerial customers also agreed that plan check comments were clear and understandable (87%), were based on the code (84%), were consistent (82%), made sense for the project (81%), and the number of plan rechecks was reasonable (83%). When compared to the other performance dimensions tested, ministerial customers expressed somewhat lower levels of satisfaction with the timing of plan correction requests (80%), the reasonableness of the turn-around time set by the City for plan check (75%), the City's performance in meeting the target date set for completing plan check (75%), and the adequacy of communication between city staff about the project during plan check (79%). Overall, 80% of ministerial customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the plan check stage.

When compared to 2006, there were statistically significant increases (improvements) in 2007 in eight of the performance dimensions tested with respect to the plan check stage among ministerial customers, and no statistically significant decreases (Table 10).

**TABLE 10 AGREEMENT WITH PLAN CHECK STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
Adequate communication among City staff during plan check	78.5	70.5	+7.9†
Plan check staff were responsive	85.2	78.2	+7.0†
Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time	79.7	73.5	+6.3†
Plan check process was completed by target date	75.4	70.2	+5.2†
Plan check staff made effort to understand customer needs	81.8	76.8	+5.0†
Number of plan rechecks was reasonable	82.9	78.0	+4.9†
Plan check staff were helpful	88.5	84.1	+4.4†
Plan check staff were knowledgeable	89.7	85.5	+4.2†
Plan check comments, corrections based on code	84.4	80.6	+3.8
Plan check staff were courteous	94.0	90.7	+3.3
Overall, satisfied with plan check stage	79.5	76.5	+3.0
Turn-around time set by the City for plan check was reasonable	74.9	72.0	+2.9
Plan check comments, corrections were consistent	82.4	80.1	+2.3
Plan check comments, corrections made sense for project	80.5	79.4	+1.1
Plan check comments, corrections clear, understandable	86.5	86.1	+0.4

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2006 and 2007 studies.

**RATINGS BY MINISTERIAL SUBGROUP** Table 11 displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 7 for the plan check stage varied according to ministerial customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 5). Once again, the results indicate that the minority of customers who were dissatisfied with the Partners' overall performance were also less likely than their counterparts to be satisfied with the Partners' performance on each of the dimensions tested for the plan check stage.

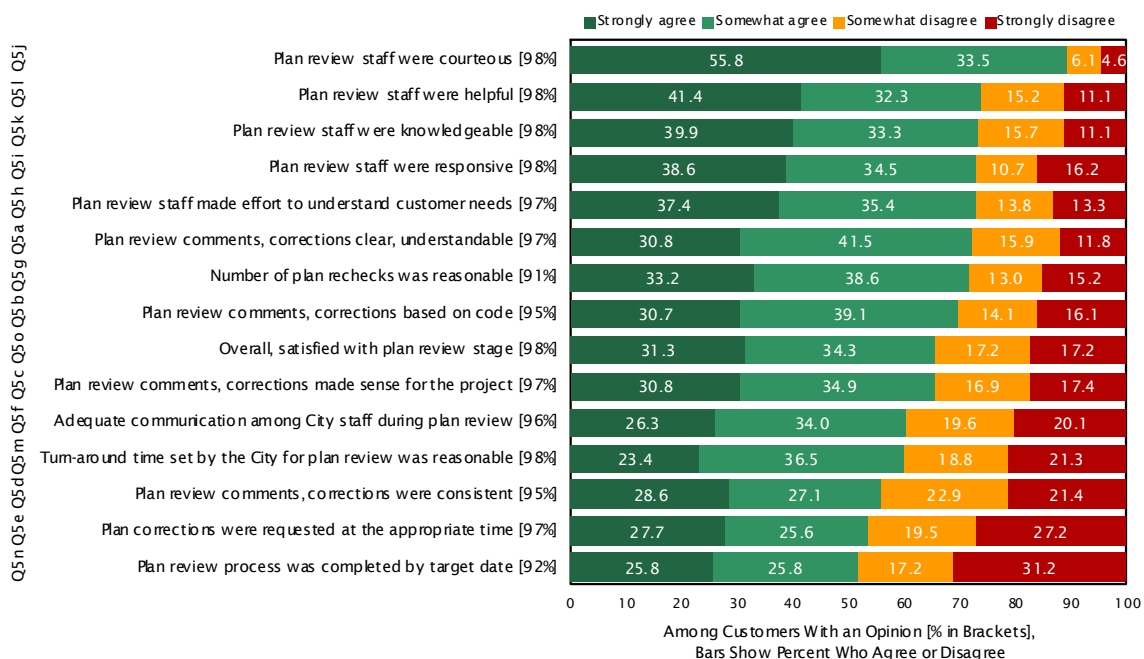
TABLE 11 AGREEMENT WITH PLAN CHECK STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: MINISTERIAL

	Overall Satisfaction (Q5)		Difference Between Groups
	Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
Overall, satisfied with plan check stage	93.6	25.8	67.7
Adequate communication among City staff during plan check	89.3	36.0	53.3
Plan check staff made effort to understand customer needs	92.8	40.3	52.5
Plan check comments, corrections made sense for project	91.0	39.8	51.2
Turn-around time set by the City for plan check was reasonable	85.4	35.6	49.8
Plan check process was completed by target date	85.1	37.1	47.9
Plan check staff were responsive	95.2	47.5	47.7
Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time	88.3	47.8	40.4
Number of plan rechecks was reasonable	91.3	51.3	40.0
Plan check comments, corrections based on code	92.6	52.6	40.0
Plan check staff were helpful	96.3	58.5	37.8
Plan check comments, corrections were consistent	90.1	53.5	36.6
Plan check staff were knowledgeable	96.8	63.0	33.7
Plan check comments, corrections clear, understandable	92.6	63.2	29.4
Plan check staff were courteous	97.6	80.0	17.6

**DISCRETIONARY** Discretionary customers were provided with a nearly identical set of statements regarding the Partners' performance during the plan review stage of their most recent project. The statements tested, as well as the results for each statement, are shown in Figure 23.

**Question 5: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the City's process of reviewing the plans you submitted for a Planning permit. I'd like you to tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience. Here is the (first/next) one: ----- Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

FIGURE 23 AGREEMENT WITH PLAN REVIEW STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY



When compared to ministerial customers, discretionary customers were less pleased with the Partners' performance during the plan review stage on each of the dimensions tested. Overall, at least two-thirds of discretionary customers agreed that plan check staff were courteous (89%), knowledgeable (73%), helpful (74%), responsive (73%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (73%). Although at least two-thirds of discretionary customers also felt that plan review comments were clear and understandable (72%), were based on the code (70%), and the number of plan rechecks was reasonable (72%), fewer perceived that the comments and corrections made sense for the project (66%), and that the comments and corrections were consistent (56%).

Like their ministerial counterparts, discretionary customers expressed the lowest levels of satisfaction with the timing of plan correction requests (53%), the reasonableness of the turn-around time set by the City for plan review (60%), the City's performance in meeting the target date set for completing plan review (52%), and the adequacy of communication between city staff about the project during plan review (60%). Overall, 66% of discretionary customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the plan review stage.

When compared to 2006, there were no statistically significant changes in the percentage of discretionary customers who agreed with each of the performance-related statements that pertained to the plan review stage (Table 12).

**TABLE 12 AGREEMENT WITH PLAN REVIEW STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
Adequate communication among City staff during plan review	60.3	53.6	+6.7
Number of plan rechecks was reasonable	71.7	65.6	+6.2
Turn-around time set by the City for plan review was reasonable	59.9	54.7	+5.2
Plan review staff were responsive	73.1	68.6	+4.5
Overall, satisfied with plan review stage	65.7	62.3	+3.4
Plan review staff made effort to understand customer needs	72.8	69.6	+3.2
Plan review process was completed by target date	51.6	48.8	+2.8
Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time	53.3	50.7	+2.6
Plan review comments, corrections made sense for the project	65.6	63.0	+2.6
Plan review staff were helpful	73.7	74.2	-0.5
Plan review comments, corrections based on code	69.8	70.9	-1.1
Plan review staff were courteous	89.3	90.7	-1.3
Plan review comments, corrections clear, understandable	72.3	75.3	-3.0
Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	55.7	59.9	-4.2
Plan review staff were knowledgeable	73.2	78.0	-4.8

**RATINGS BY DISCRETIONARY SUBGROUP** Table 13 on the next page displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 5 for the plan review stage varied according to discretionary customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 3).

**TABLE 13 AGREEMENT WITH PLAN REVIEW STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: DISCRETIONARY**

	Overall Satisfaction (Q3)		Difference Between Groups
	Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
Overall, satisfied with plan review stage	90.1	16.9	73.2
Plan review staff were responsive	92.4	35.4	57.0
Plan review staff were knowledgeable	91.7	35.9	55.7
Plan review staff made effort to understand customer needs	90.8	36.5	54.3
Plan review staff were helpful	91.7	37.5	54.2
Plan review comments, corrections based on code	86.8	32.8	54.0
Number of plan rechecks was reasonable	88.1	35.7	52.4
Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time	70.0	20.6	49.4
Plan review process was completed by target date	68.0	18.6	49.4
Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	71.9	22.6	49.3
Plan review comments, corrections made sense for the project	80.8	33.3	47.4
Plan review comments, corrections clear, understandable	87.7	40.6	47.1
Adequate communication among City staff during plan review	75.8	29.7	46.1
Turn-around time set by the City for plan review was reasonable	74.2	30.2	44.1
Plan review staff were courteous	96.2	74.6	21.6

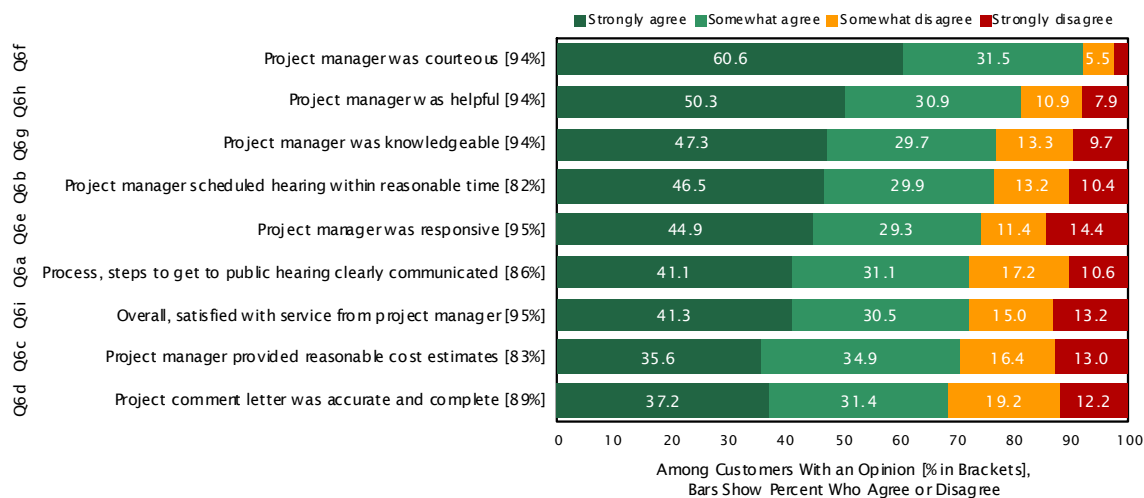
## PROJECT MANAGER

Most discretionary projects are assigned a Project Manager to serve as a single point-of-contact for the customer. The purpose of a Project Manager is to ensure that plan reviews are conducted in a timely and predictable manner, that code issues are resolved, and that the project is brought to an appropriate decision point, such as a public hearing, redesign, or construction permit issuance. Overall, 77% of discretionary customers indicated they personally worked with a Project Manager assigned by the City on their most recent project.

Question 6 in the discretionary survey was designed to measure customers' satisfaction with the performance of their Project Manager on their most recent project. As in previous sections, respondents were provided with a series of performance-related statements about the Project Manager and asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement. The statements tested and the results for each statement are shown in Figure 24 below.

**Question 6: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the project manager assigned to the project by the City. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 24 AGREEMENT WITH PROJECT MANAGER STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**



Overall, at least three-quarters of discretionary customers agreed that the Project Manager was courteous (92%), knowledgeable (77%), helpful (81%), and responsive (74%). More than two-thirds of discretionary customers also agreed that the Project Manager communicated clearly regarding the process and steps needed to get to a public hearing (72%), that once all of the documents were ready, the Project Manager scheduled the hearing within a reasonable amount of time (76%), the Project Manager provided reasonable estimates of the processing costs throughout the project (71%), and that the project comment letter was accurate and complete (69%). Overall, 72% of customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Project Manager on their most recent discretionary project.



When compared to 2006, there were no statistically significant changes in the percentage of discretionary customers who agreed with each of the performance-related statements that pertained to the Project Manager (Table 14).

**TABLE 14 AGREEMENT WITH PROJECT MANAGER STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
Project manager was helpful	81.2	75.9	+5.3
Project manager was responsive	74.3	73.0	+1.3
Overall, satisfied with service from project manager	71.9	70.9	+1.0
Project manager was courteous	92.1	92.0	+0.1
Project manager scheduled hearing within reasonable time	76.4	77.1	-0.7
Project comment letter was accurate and complete	68.6	71.4	-2.8
Project manager provided reasonable cost estimates	70.5	75.0	-4.5
Process, steps to get to public hearing clearly communicated	72.2	76.7	-4.5
Project manager was knowledgeable	77.0	81.6	-4.7

**RATINGS BY DISCRETIONARY SUBGROUP** Table 15 below displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 6 for the Project Manager varied according to discretionary customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 3).

**TABLE 15 AGREEMENT WITH PROJECT MANAGER STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: DISCRETIONARY**

	Overall Satisfaction (Q3)		Difference Between Groups
	Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
Overall, satisfied with service from project manager	92.6	32.8	59.8
Project comment letter was accurate and complete	85.7	32.0	53.7
Project manager was responsive	91.7	41.4	50.3
Project manager was knowledgeable	92.6	46.4	46.2
Project manager was helpful	96.3	52.6	43.6
Project manager scheduled hearing within reasonable amount of time	91.3	49.0	42.3
Process, steps needed to get to public hearing clearly communicated	85.4	48.1	37.3
Project manager provided reasonable cost estimates	81.1	50.0	31.1
Project manager was courteous	99.1	78.6	20.5

## PUBLIC HEARING

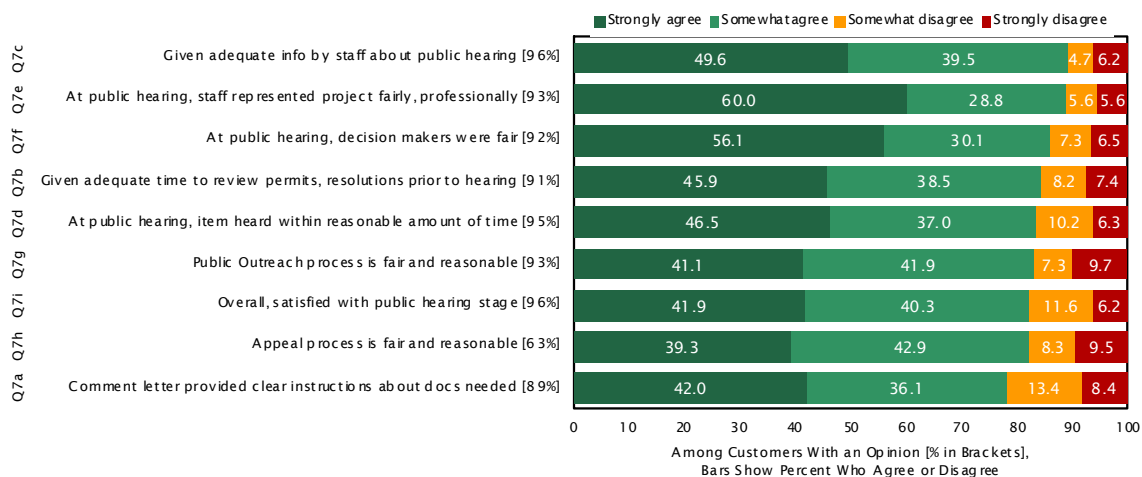
The approval of ministerial projects is based solely on whether a project complies with regulations of the Municipal Code and, where applicable, any prior approved discretionary decision. If a project complies, the City must, by law, issue a permit.

Discretionary projects, on the other hand, are labeled as such because some level of discretion is given to the assigned decision makers when deciding whether to approve or deny a project. This decision usually takes place at a noticed public hearing once the plans are submitted and Development Services staff has reviewed them against codes for discretionary permits. Community groups also play a role in this process by reviewing plans and making recommendations to the City Council, Planning Commission and other decision makers.

Overall, 60% of discretionary customers indicated they were personally involved in the public hearing stage on their most recent project. Question 7 in the discretionary survey was designed to measure customers' satisfaction with the public hearing process. As in previous sections, respondents were provided with a series of statements about the public hearing process and asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement. The statements tested and the results for each statement are shown in Figure 25.

**Question 7: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the public hearing process. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 25 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC HEARING STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**



Opinions about the public hearing process were reasonably consistent regardless of what aspect of the process was referenced. Approximately 85% of discretionary customers agreed that staff represented their project in a fair, professional manner (89%), that the decision-makers were fair in how they made their decisions (86%), and that they were given adequate information by staff about how the public hearing process would go (89%). Over 80% of customers perceived that the item was heard within a reasonable amount of time at the public hearing (84%), that the appeal process is fair and reasonable (82%), that they were given adequate time to review permits and

resolutions prior to the public hearing (84%), and that the Public Outreach process is fair and reasonable (83%). A slightly smaller proportion of customers indicated that the project comment letter provided clear and correct instructions about the documents needed before a public hearing could be scheduled (78%). Overall, 82% of discretionary customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the public hearing stage.

When compared to 2006, there were no statistically significant changes in the percentage of discretionary customers who agreed with each of the performance-related statements that pertained to the public hearing stage (Table 16).

**TABLE 16 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC HEARING STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
Public Outreach process is fair and reasonable	83.1	75.9	+7.2
Given adequate time to review permits, resolutions prior to hearing	84.4	77.3	+7.1
Given adequate info by staff about public hearing	89.1	83.9	+5.2
At public hearing, staff represented project fairly, professionally	88.8	85.4	+3.4
At public hearing, item heard within reasonable amount of time	83.5	81.0	+2.5
Appeal process is fair and reasonable	82.1	80.8	+1.3
At public hearing, decision makers were fair	86.2	84.9	+1.3
Comment letter provided clear instructions about docs needed	78.2	78.2	-0.0
Overall, satisfied with public hearing stage	82.2	84.6	-2.4

**RATINGS BY DISCRETIONARY SUBGROUP** Table 17 below displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 7 for the public hearing stage varied according to discretionary customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 3).

**TABLE 17 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC HEARING STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: DISCRETIONARY**

	Overall Satisfaction (Q3)		Difference Between Groups
	Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
Overall, satisfied with public hearing stage	97.5	57.1	40.3
Appeal process is fair and reasonable	92.5	64.5	27.9
Comment letter provided clear, correct instructions about documents needed	87.8	61.4	26.5
Public Outreach process is fair and reasonable	92.1	68.1	24.0
At public hearing, item heard within reasonable amount of time	92.3	68.7	23.6
At public hearing, decision makers were fair	94.7	71.7	23.0
Given adequate info by staff about public hearing	97.5	75.5	22.0
At public hearing, staff represented project in fair, professional manner	96.1	77.1	19.0
Given adequate time to review permits, resolutions prior to hearing	89.3	76.1	13.2

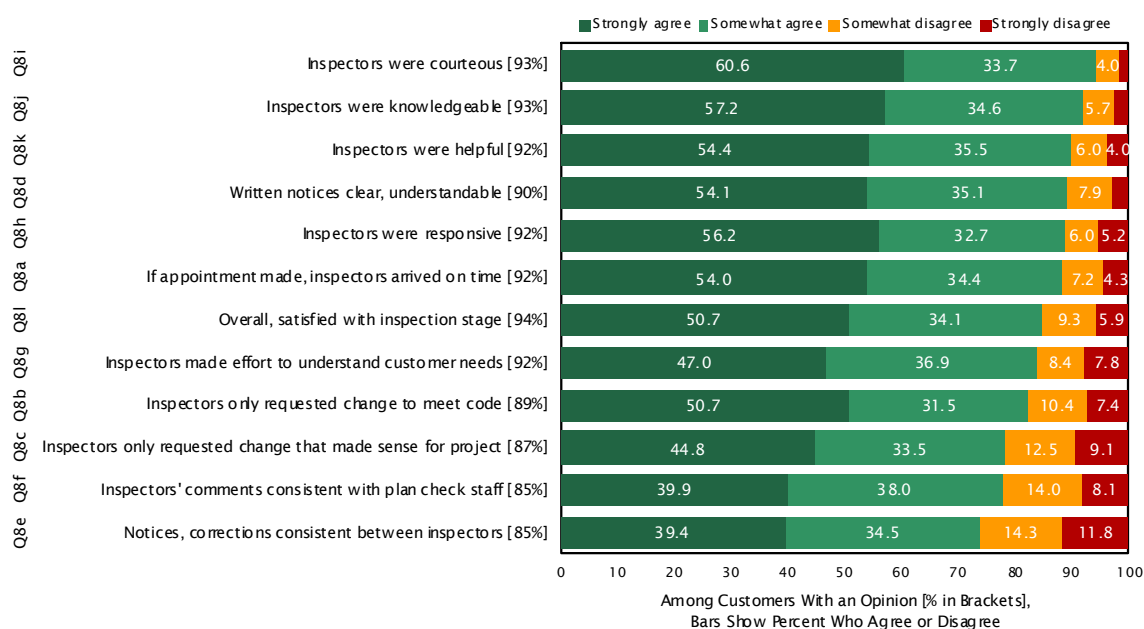
## BUILDING INSPECTIONS

The final stage in the process is the inspection stage, which involves the on-site examination of a project completed pursuant to an issued permit. Inspections are conducted to ensure that projects are completed according to plan and are in compliance with all model codes and City ordinances. On-site inspections are conducted by a staff of trained inspectors who specialize in each of the project and permit types. Overall, 49% of ministerial customers indicated they were personally involved in the inspection stage on their most recent project.<sup>7</sup>

As in previous sections, customers' satisfaction with the Partners' performance during the inspection stage was measured by providing them with a series of performance-related statements about the inspection stage and asking whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements. The statements tested and the results for each statement are shown in Figure 26.

**Question 8: Ministerial** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the building inspection process. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 26 AGREEMENT WITH BUILDING INSPECTION STATEMENTS: MINISTERIAL**



In contrast to the public hearing stage, opinions about the inspection stage varied considerably depending on what aspect of the stage was referenced. Overall, the vast majority of customers agreed that inspectors arrived on-time for scheduled appointments (88%) and were courteous (94%), responsive (89%), knowledgeable (92%), helpful (90%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (84%). Moreover, although eight out of ten customers agreed that written notices and corrections were clear and understandable (89%) and that inspectors only

7. Because of the length of the discretionary survey, only ministerial customers were asked questions relating to the inspection stage.

requested a change if it was required to meet code (82%), the levels of agreement were somewhat lower with respect to the perceived consistency of notices and corrections issued by different inspectors on the project (74%), the consistency of inspectors' comments with those of plan check staff (78%), and that changes were requested only if they made sense for the project (78%). Overall, 85% of ministerial customers agreed that they were satisfied with the service they received during the inspection stage of the process.

When compared to 2006, there were statistically significant increases (improvements) in 2007 in four of the performance dimensions tested with respect to the building inspection stage among ministerial customers, and no statistically significant decreases (Table 18).

**TABLE 18 AGREEMENT WITH BUILDING INSPECTION STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
Inspectors made effort to understand customer needs	83.9	74.9	+8.9†
Inspectors were helpful	90.0	82.8	+7.1†
Inspectors were knowledgeable	91.8	84.8	+7.0†
Written notices clear, understandable	89.2	82.7	+6.5†
Notices, corrections consistent between inspectors	73.9	67.4	+6.5
Inspectors' comments consistent with plan check staff	77.9	72.0	+5.9
Inspectors only requested change that made sense for project	78.4	73.2	+5.2
Inspectors were courteous	94.3	90.5	+3.8
Inspectors were responsive	88.8	86.2	+2.6
Inspectors only requested change to meet code	82.2	79.9	+2.3
Overall, satisfied with inspection stage	84.8	83.0	+1.8
If appointment made, inspectors arrived on time	88.4	90.3	-1.8

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2006 and 2007 studies.

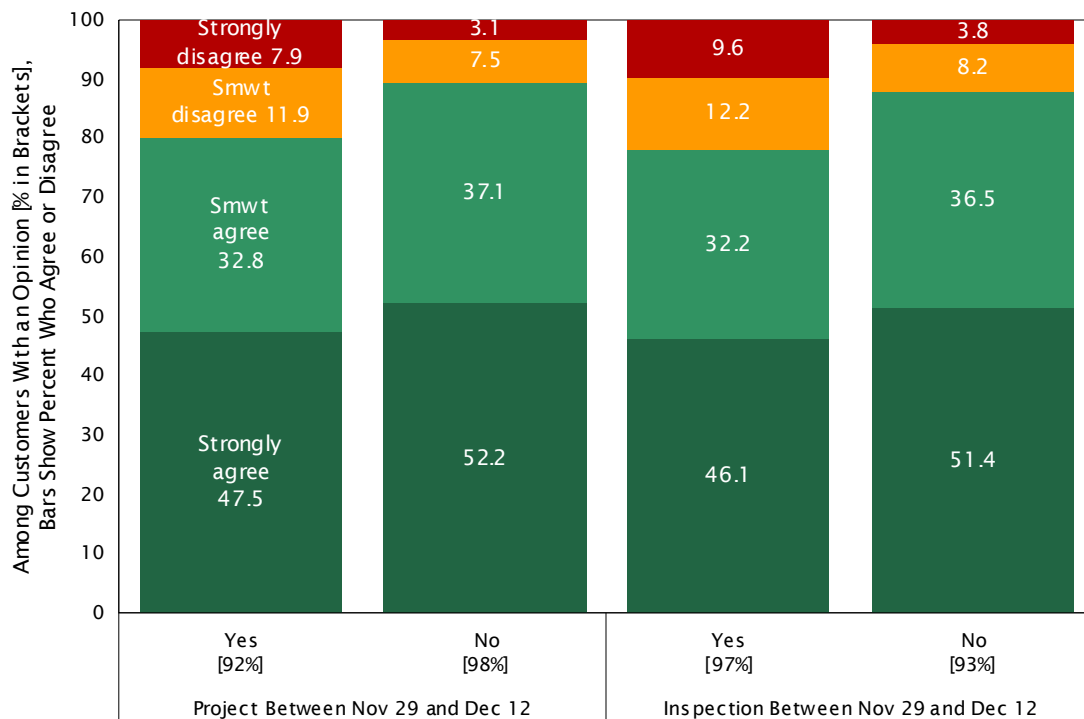
**RATINGS BY MINISTERIAL SUBGROUP** Table 19 below displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 8 for the inspection stage varied according to ministerial customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 5).

**TABLE 19 AGREEMENT WITH BUILDING INSPECTION STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: MINISTERIAL**

	Overall Satisfaction (Q5)		Difference Between Groups
	Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
Overall, satisfied with inspection stage	93.8	53.9	39.9
Inspectors only requested change that made sense for project	86.6	50.0	36.6
Inspectors made effort to understand customer needs	90.4	60.3	30.1
Inspectors only requested change to meet code	87.8	60.6	27.3
Inspectors' comments consistent with plan check staff	84.3	58.0	26.4
If appointment made, inspectors arrived on time	93.8	67.6	26.2
Inspectors were responsive	93.8	69.4	24.4
Notices, corrections consistent between inspectors	79.2	55.7	23.5
Inspectors were helpful	94.5	72.6	21.9
Inspectors were knowledgeable	95.7	78.4	17.3
Written notices clear, understandable	92.9	76.4	16.5
Inspectors were courteous	96.7	86.1	10.6

**OVERALL SATISFACTION BY EXPERIENCE WITH STRIKE** Between November 29, 2007 and December 12, 2008, the City of San José experienced a shortage of building inspectors due to a labor strike. Figure 27 shows how overall satisfaction with the service received during the building inspection stage on their most recent project varied according to whether a customer had a project active during this period, as well as whether they had (or tried to schedule) an inspection during this period. As shown in the figure, those who had an active project and/or had (or attempted to schedule) an inspection during this period were slightly less satisfied than their respective counterparts. It is worth noting, however, that the only statistically significant difference between the two groups is the percentage who indicated that they *strongly* disagreed with the statements.

**FIGURE 27 SATISFACTION WITH BUILDING INSPECTION STAGE BY ACTIVE PROJECT & INSPECTION DURING STRIKE**



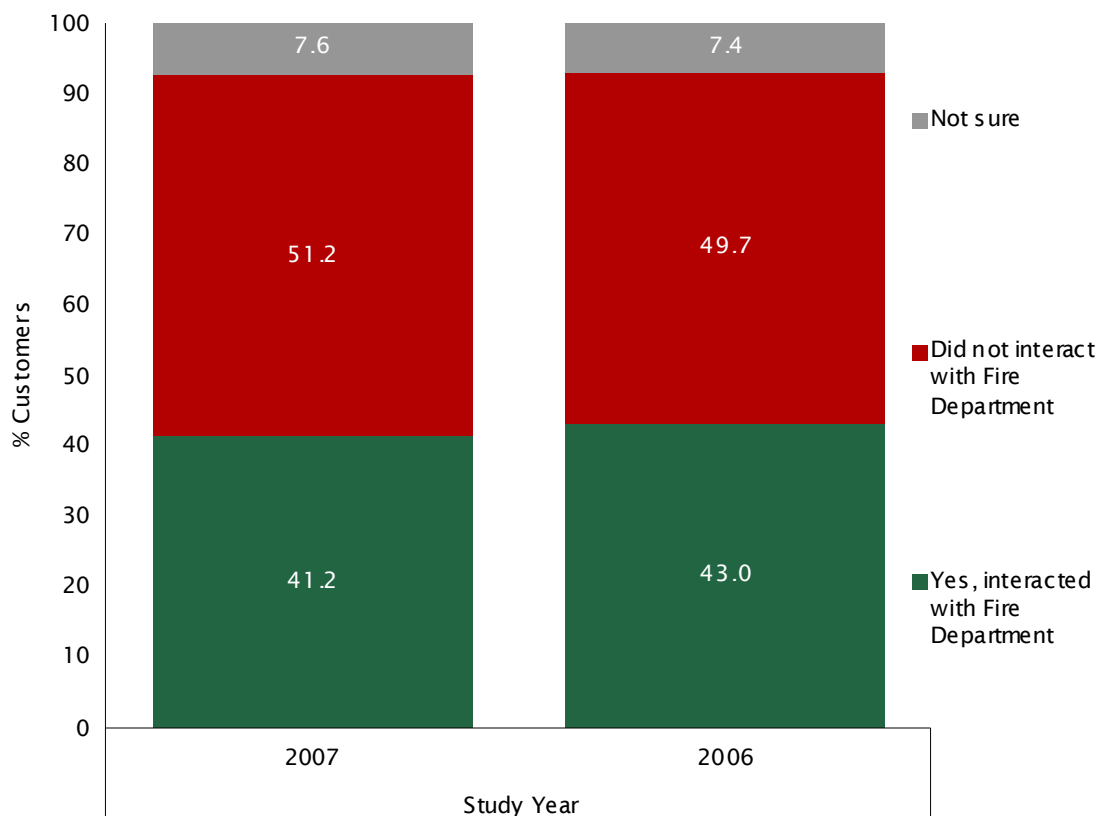
## FIRE DEPARTMENT

Development Services projects that present fire-related issues—such as a need for fire sprinkler systems and/or fire alarm systems—require special permits, project review and inspection by San José's Bureau of Fire Prevention. This section of the report presents the findings of several questions that were designed to profile customers' experiences when interacting specifically with the Fire Department.

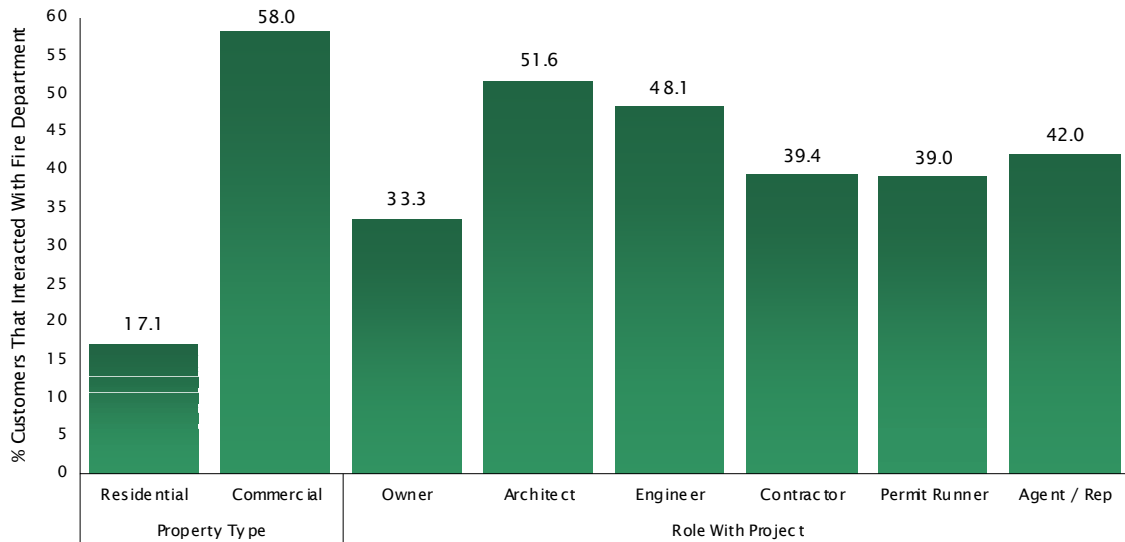
**RECENT EXPERIENCE WITH FIRE BUREAU** The first question in this series was used as a screening question to identify customers who, in the past six months, received permit, plan review and/or inspection services from San José's Fire Department on at least one project. Overall, 41% of ministerial customers surveyed indicated that they had received such services from the Fire Department during the period of interest (see Figure 28). The corresponding figure among discretionary customers was 56% (see Figure 30). Among both customer groups, those working on commercial projects and architects were the most likely to report having a project that required interaction with the Fire Department (see Figures 29 & 31).

**Question 9: Ministerial/Question 8: Discretionary** *In the past six months, did one or more of your projects require a permit, project review, or inspection from San José's Fire Department?*

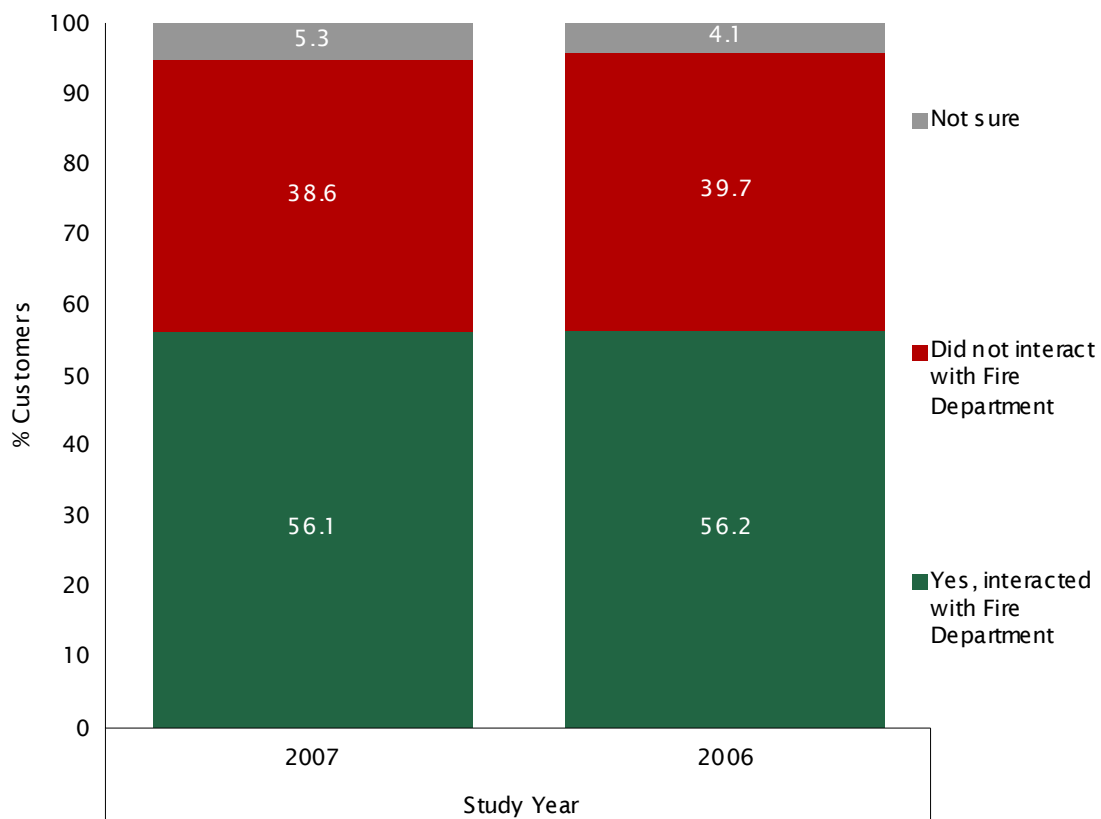
**FIGURE 28 ONE OR MORE PROJECTS IN PAST SIX MONTHS REQUIRED INVOLVEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**



**FIGURE 29 ONE OR MORE PROJECTS IN PAST SIX MONTHS REQUIRED INVOLVEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT BY PROPERTY TYPE & ROLE WITH PROJECT: MINISTERIAL**

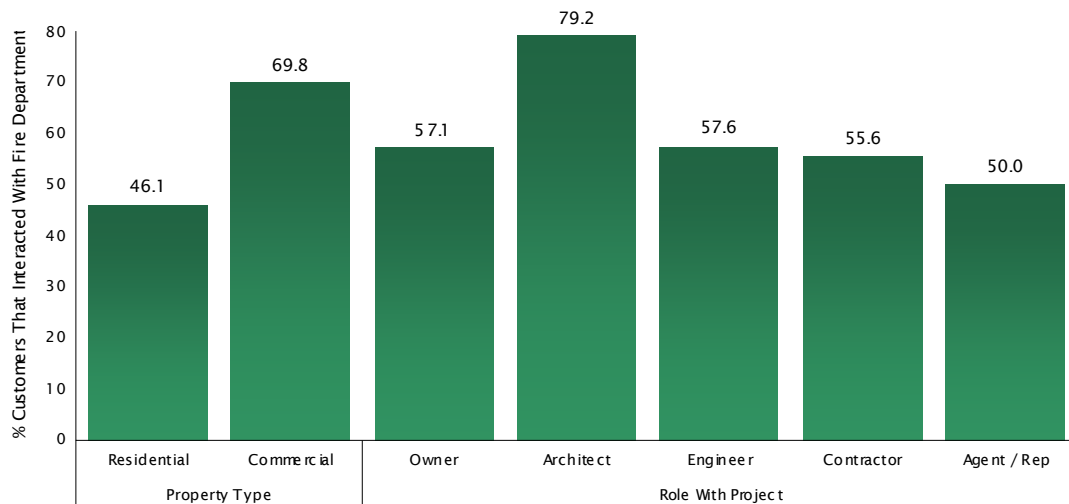


**FIGURE 30 ONE OR MORE PROJECTS IN PAST SIX MONTHS REQUIRED INVOLVEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**





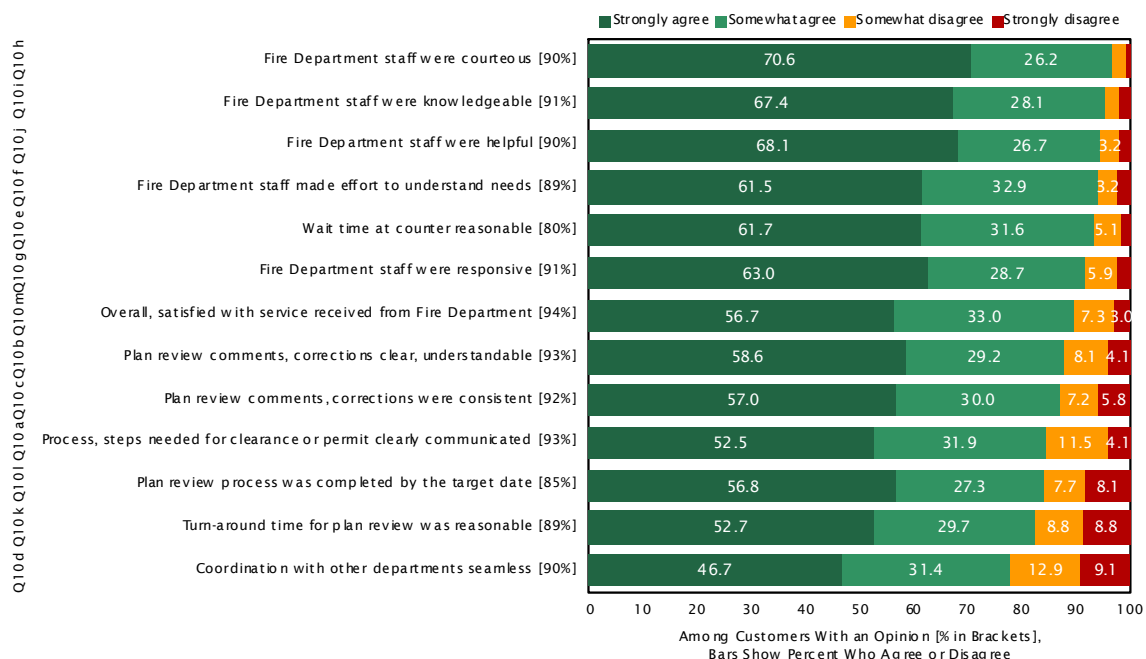
**FIGURE 31 ONE OR MORE PROJECTS IN PAST SIX MONTHS REQUIRED INVOLVEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT BY PROPERTY TYPE & ROLE WITH PROJECT: DISCRETIONARY**



**MINISTERIAL** Ministerial customers' satisfaction with the Fire Bureau's performance on past projects was measured in the same manner described previously throughout this report. For each of the performance-related statements paraphrased in Figure 32, customers were simply asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement based on their recent experience with the Fire Department.

**Question 10: Ministerial** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San José's Fire Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Fire Department. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 32 AGREEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS: MINISTERIAL**



Overall, at least 90% of ministerial customers agreed that Fire Department staff were courteous (97%), knowledgeable (96%), helpful (95%), responsive (92%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (94%). At least 85% of ministerial customers also agreed that the wait time at the permit counter before being assisted by Fire Department staff was reasonable (93%), that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (88%), and that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (87%). When compared to the other dimensions tested, customers expressed slightly lower levels of satisfaction with respect to timeliness of performance and certain aspects of communication—including communication/coordination between Departments during plan review (78%), communication regarding the process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit (84%), the reasonableness of the turn-around time set for plan review (82%), and the completion of the plan review process by the target date set by the Fire Department (84%). Overall, 90% of ministerial customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Fire Department.

When compared to 2006, there were statistically significant increases (improvements) in 2007 in four of the performance dimensions tested with respect to the Fire Department among ministerial customers, and no statistically significant decreases (Table 20).

**TABLE 20 AGREEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
Overall, satisfied with service received from Fire Department	89.7	80.1	+9.5†
Fire Department staff made effort to understand needs	94.3	85.2	+9.1†
Plan review process was completed by the target date	84.1	75.7	+8.4†
Wait time at counter reasonable	93.3	86.6	+6.7†
Turn-around time for plan review was reasonable	82.3	76.5	+5.8
Fire Department staff were responsive	91.7	86.2	+5.5
Coordination with other departments seamless	78.0	72.8	+5.3
Process, steps needed for clearance or permit clearly communicated	84.4	80.6	+3.8
Fire Department staff were knowledgeable	95.5	93.0	+2.5
Fire Department staff were courteous	96.9	95.1	+1.8
Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	87.0	85.4	+1.7
Plan review comments, corrections clear, understandable	87.8	87.6	+0.2
Fire Department staff were helpful	94.7	N/A	N/A

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2006 and 2007 studies.

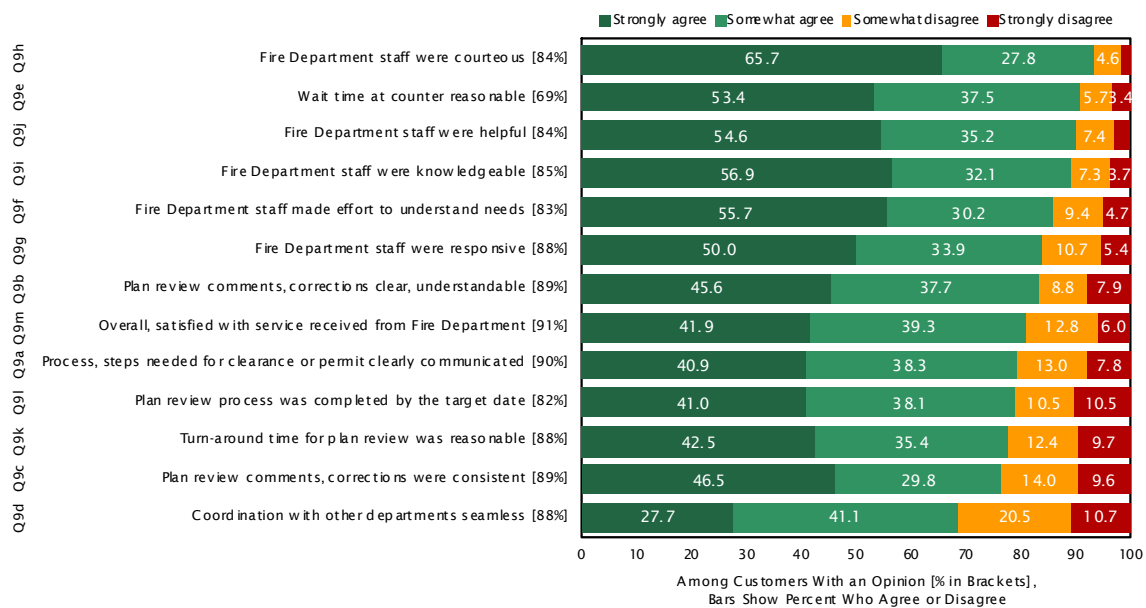
**DISCRETIONARY** Discretionary customers were provided with an identical set of statements regarding the Fire Department's performance on recent projects. The statements tested, as well as the results for each statement, are shown in Figure 33 on the next page.

When compared to ministerial customers, discretionary customers were less pleased with the Fire Department's performance on each of the dimensions tested. Overall, at least 80% of discretionary customers agreed that Fire Department staff were courteous (94%), knowledgeable (89%), helpful (90%), responsive (84%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (86%). Although at least 80% of discretionary customers also agreed that the wait time at the permit counter before being assisted by Fire Department staff was reasonable (91%) and that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (83%), a smaller percentage agreed that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (76%). Like their ministerial counterparts, discretionary customers generally expressed somewhat lower levels of satisfaction

with respect to timeliness of performance and certain aspects of communication—including communication/coordination between Departments during plan review (69%), communication regarding the process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit (79%), the reasonableness of the turn-around time set for plan review (78%), and the completion of the plan review process by the target date set by the Fire Department (79%). Overall, 81% of discretionary customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Fire Department.

**Question 9: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San José's Fire Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Fire Department. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 33 AGREEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**



When compared to 2006, there were statistically significant increases (improvements) in 2007 in two of the performance dimensions tested with respect to the Fire Department among discretionary customers, and no statistically significant decreases (see Table 21).

**TABLE 21 AGREEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
Coordination with other departments seamless	68.7	53.0	+15.8†
Process, steps needed for clearance or permit clearly communicated	79.1	66.9	+12.2†
Turn-around time for plan review was reasonable	77.9	67.7	+10.2
Overall, satisfied with service received from Fire Department	81.2	71.0	+10.2
Plan review process was completed by the target date	79.0	69.4	+9.7
Plan review comments, corrections clear, understandable	83.3	73.7	+9.6
Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	76.3	67.2	+9.2
Fire Department staff made effort to understand needs	85.8	78.0	+7.9
Fire Department staff were responsive	83.9	76.5	+7.4
Wait time at counter reasonable	90.9	86.7	+4.2
Fire Department staff were courteous	93.5	92.2	+1.3
Fire Department staff were knowledgeable	89.0	88.7	+0.3
Fire Department staff were helpful	89.8	N/A	N/A

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2006 and 2007 studies.

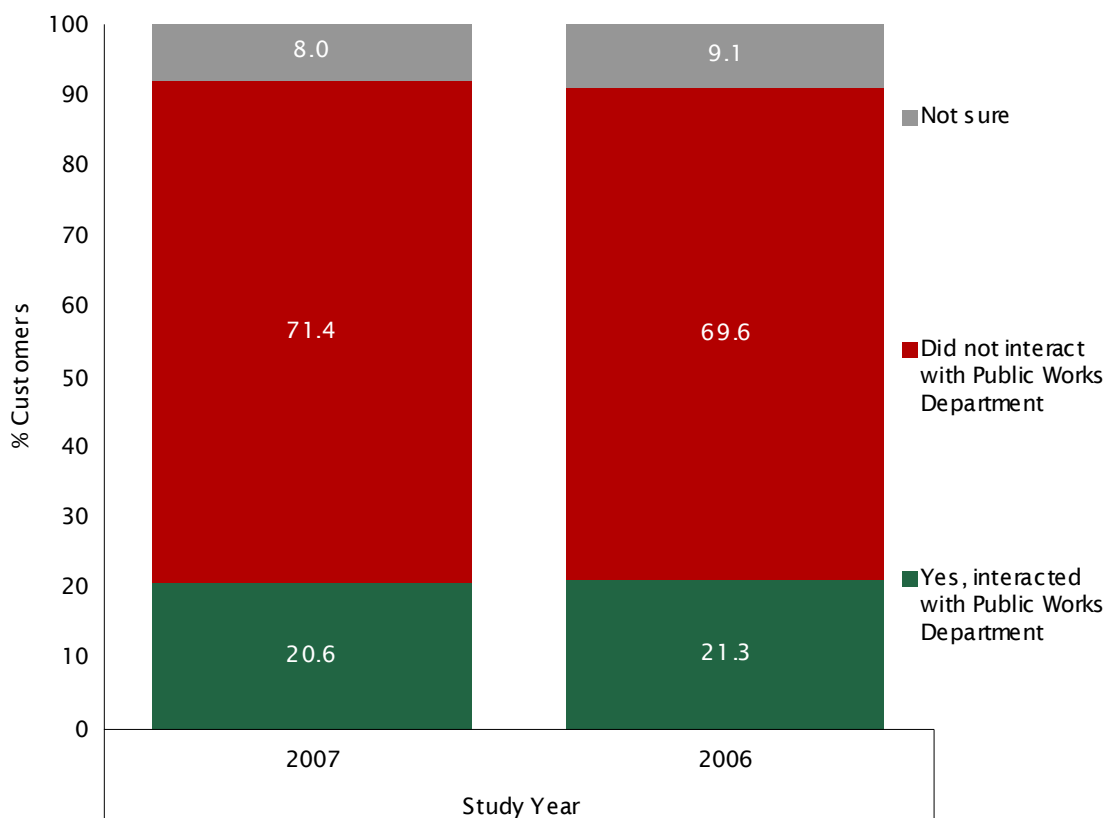
## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

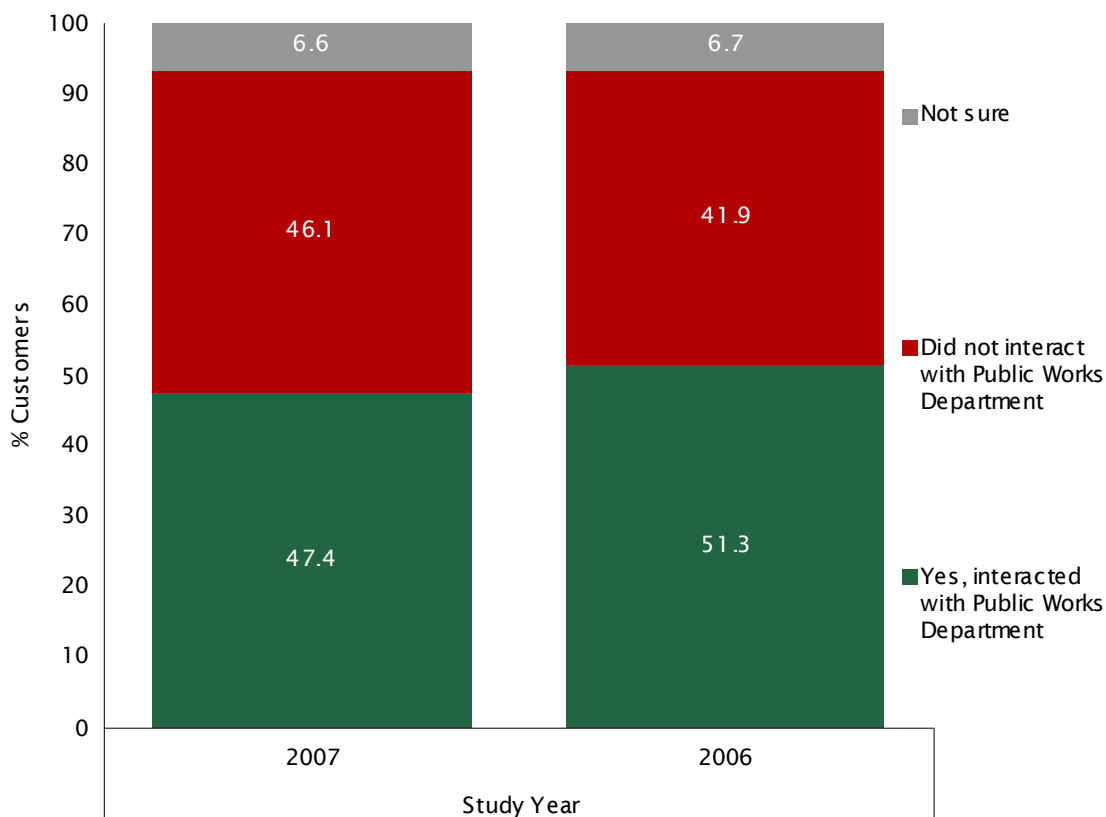
Development Services projects that present public works-related issues—such as projects that impact public facilities (e.g., traffic, streets, sewers, utilities and median landscaping) and/or are located in a flood hazard zone or geological hazard zone—require special permits, project review and clearances by San José's Public Works Department. This section of the report presents the findings of several questions that were designed to profile customers' experiences when interacting specifically with the Public Works Department.

**RECENT EXPERIENCE WITH PUBLIC WORKS** The first question in this series was used as a screening question to identify customers who, in the past six months, received permit, project review and/or inspection services from San José's Public Works Department on at least one project. Overall, 21% of ministerial customers surveyed indicated that they had received such services from the Public Works Department during the period of interest (Figure 34). The corresponding figure among discretionary customers was 47% (see Figure 36). The results within both customer subgroups are statistically similar to those found in 2006.

**Question 11: Ministerial/Question 10: Discretionary** *In the past six months, did one or more of your projects require a permit, project review, or inspection from San José's Public Works Department?*

**FIGURE 34 PROJECT IN PAST SIX MONTHS WITH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**



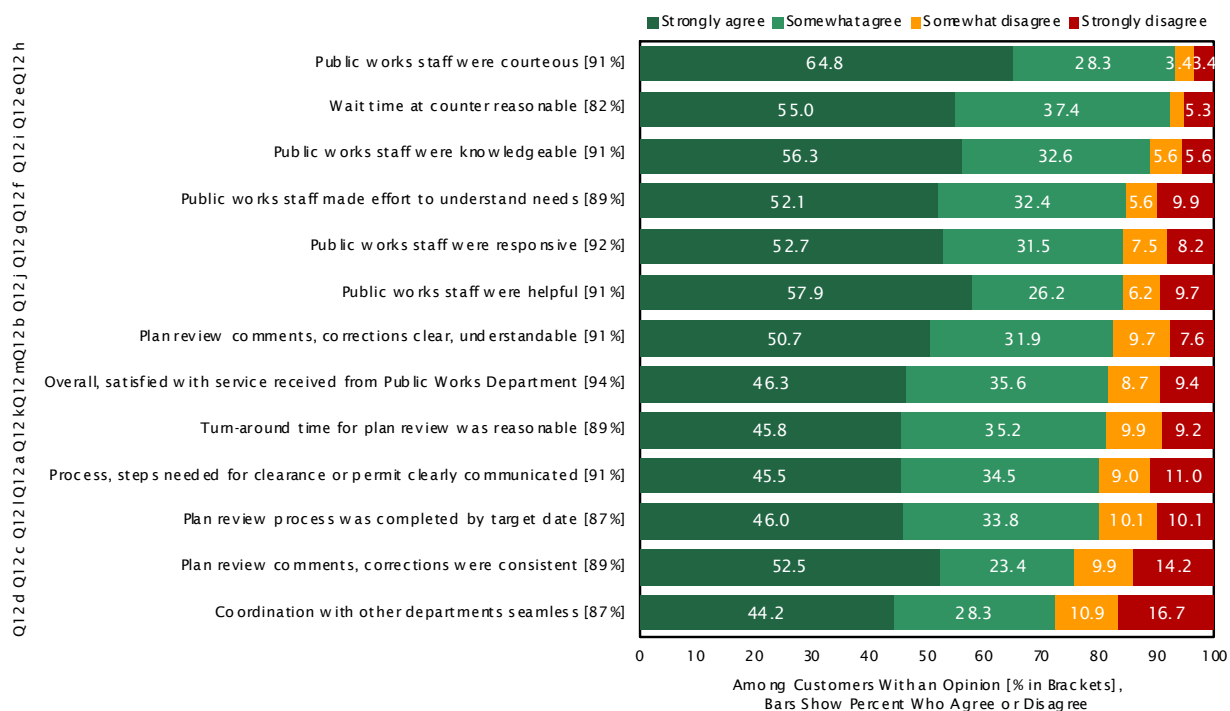
**FIGURE 35 PROJECT IN PAST SIX MONTHS WITH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

**MINISTERIAL** Ministerial customers' satisfaction with the Public Works Department's performance on past projects was measured in the same manner described previously for the Fire Department. For each of the performance-related statements paraphrased in Figure 36, customers were simply asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement based on their recent experience with the Public Works Department.

Overall, at least 80% of ministerial customers agreed that Public Works staff were courteous (93%), knowledgeable (89%), helpful (84%), responsive (84%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (85%). At least three-quarters of ministerial customers also agreed that the wait time at the permit counter before being assisted by Public Works staff was reasonable (92%), that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (83%), that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (76%), that the process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated (80%), that the turn-around time set by the Public Works Department for plan review was reasonable (81%), and that the plan review process was completed by the target date set by the Public Works Department (80%). When compared to the other dimensions tested, ministerial customers expressed somewhat lower levels of satisfaction with respect to the communication/coordination between Departments during plan review (73%). Overall, 82% of ministerial customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Public Works Department on recent projects.

**Question 12: Ministerial** Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San José's Public Works Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Public Works Department. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

**FIGURE 36 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS: MINISTERIAL**



When compared to 2006, there were statistically significant increases (improvements) in 2007 in two of the performance dimensions tested with respect to the Public Works Department among ministerial customers, and no statistically significant decreases (Table 22).

**TABLE 22 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

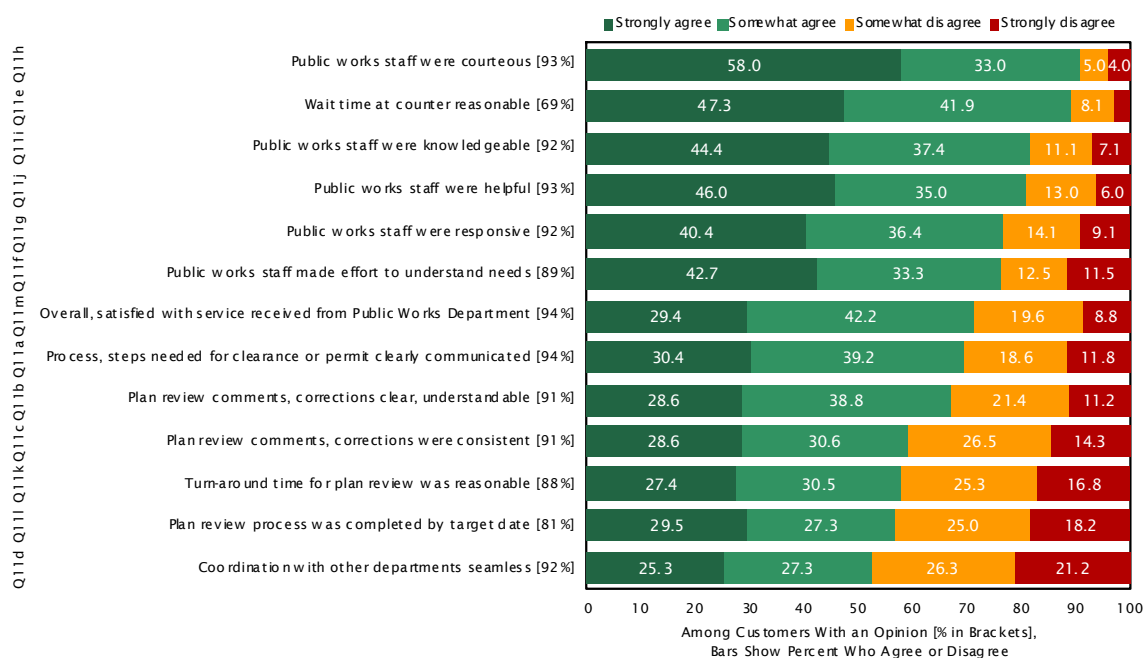
	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
Turn-around time for plan review was reasonable	81.0	72.9	+8.1†
Wait time at counter reasonable	92.4	84.6	+7.8†
Coordination with other departments seamless	72.5	65.7	+6.8
Overall, satisfied with service received from Public Works Department	81.9	76.0	+5.9
Public works staff made effort to understand needs	84.5	79.0	+5.5
Plan review comments, corrections clear, understandable	82.6	77.5	+5.2
Plan review process was completed by target date	79.9	75.4	+4.5
Public works staff were knowledgeable	88.9	84.7	+4.2
Process, steps needed for clearance or permit clearly communicated	80.0	76.4	+3.6
Public works staff were courteous	93.1	89.5	+3.6
Public works staff were responsive	84.2	81.9	+2.3
Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	75.9	77.9	-2.0
Public works staff were helpful	84.1	N/A	N/A

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2006 and 2007 studies.

**DISCRETIONARY** Discretionary customers were provided with an identical set of statements regarding the Public Works Department's performance on recent projects. The statements tested, as well as the results for each statement, are shown in Figure 37 below.

**Question 11: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San José's Public Works Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Public Works Department. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 37 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**



Overall, at least three-quarters of discretionary customers agreed that Public Works staff were courteous (91%), knowledgeable (82%), helpful (81%), responsive (77%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (76%). Most discretionary customers also agreed that the wait time at the permit counter before being assisted by Public Works staff was reasonable (89%), that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (67%), that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (59%), and that the process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated (70%). When compared to the other dimensions tested, discretionary customers expressed somewhat lower levels of satisfaction with respect to the Public Works Department's completion of the plan review process by the target date (57%), the communication/coordination between Departments during plan review (53%), the consistency of plan review comments and corrections (59%), and the reasonableness of the turn-around time set by the Department for plan review (58%). Overall, 72% of discretionary customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Public Works Department on recent projects.



When compared to 2006, there were no statistically significant increases (improvements) in 2007 and two statistically significant decreases in the performance-related statements tested for the Public Works Department among discretionary customers (Table 23).

**TABLE 23 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
Wait time at counter reasonable	89.2	92.3	-3.1
Public works staff were responsive	76.8	80.0	-3.2
Process, steps needed for clearance or permit clearly communicated	69.6	73.2	-3.6
Public works staff were knowledgeable	81.8	87.0	-5.2
Public works staff were courteous	91.0	96.8	-5.8
Overall, satisfied with service received from Public Works Department	71.6	78.6	-7.0
Coordination with other departments seamless	52.5	60.2	-7.6
Plan review comments, corrections clear, understandable	67.3	77.2	-9.9
Public works staff made effort to understand needs	76.0	86.1	-10.0
Plan review process was completed by target date	56.8	68.4	-11.6
Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	59.2	71.9	-12.7†
Turn-around time for plan review was reasonable	57.9	71.2	-13.3†
Public works staff were helpful	81.0	N/A	N/A

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2006 and 2007 studies.

## INFORMATION ACCESS

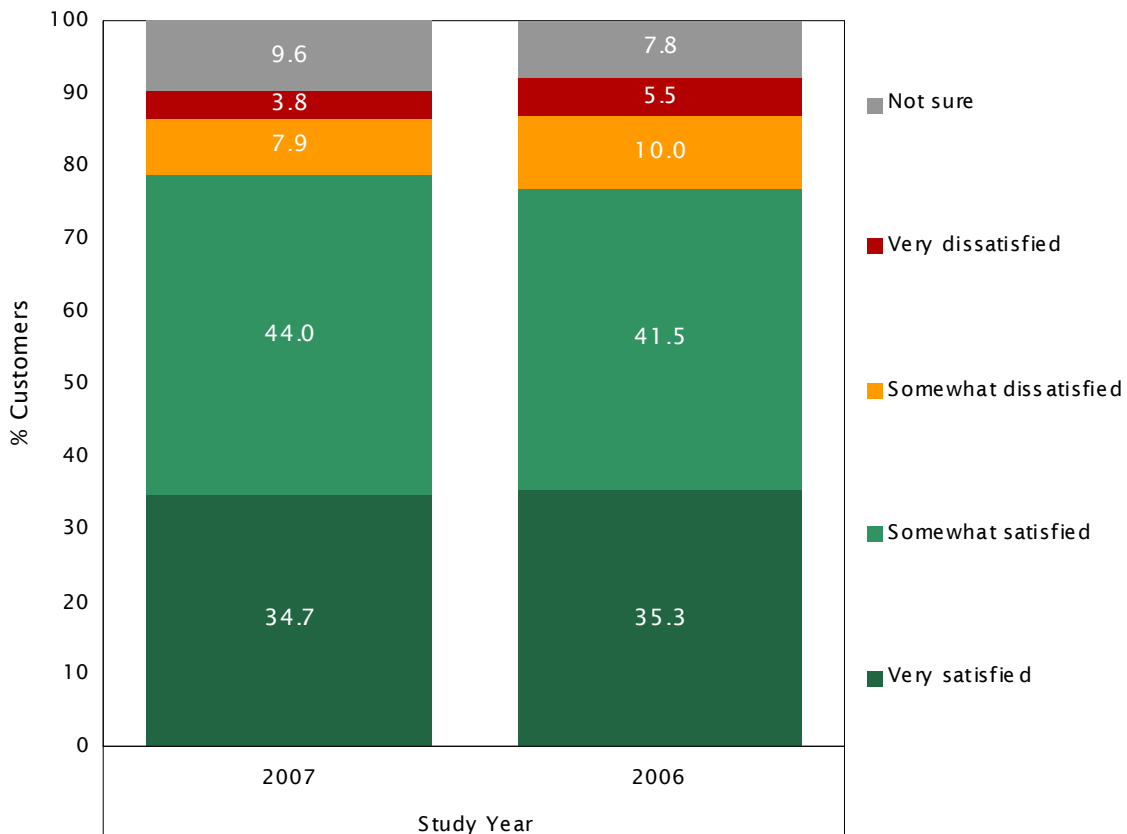
Customers must be well-informed about the types of permits and approvals that their project will need, as well as the steps and documents required for permit approval, if they are to successfully navigate the development process in an efficient and timely manner. To assist them in this respect, San José's Development Services Partners provide detailed information and step-by-step guides through their website, brochures, and through workshops and meetings.

One of the goals of this study was to measure customers' use of, and satisfaction with, key information sources provided by the Partners. The first question in this series simply asked whether they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to make development services information available online, in brochures, and through meetings.

**MINISTERIAL** As shown in Figure 38, more than three-quarters of ministerial customers indicated that they were either very satisfied (35%) or somewhat satisfied (44%) with the Partners' efforts to make information available to them in 2007. These findings are statistically similar to those recorded in 2006.

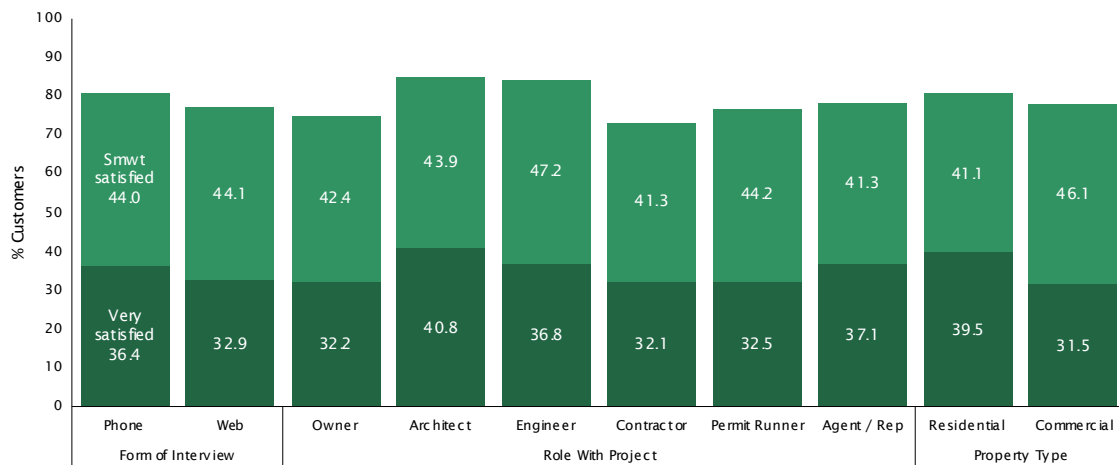
**Question 13: Ministerial** *For the remaining questions, please answer for the City of San José as a whole. Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to make development services information available through their web site, brochures and meetings?*

**FIGURE 38 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

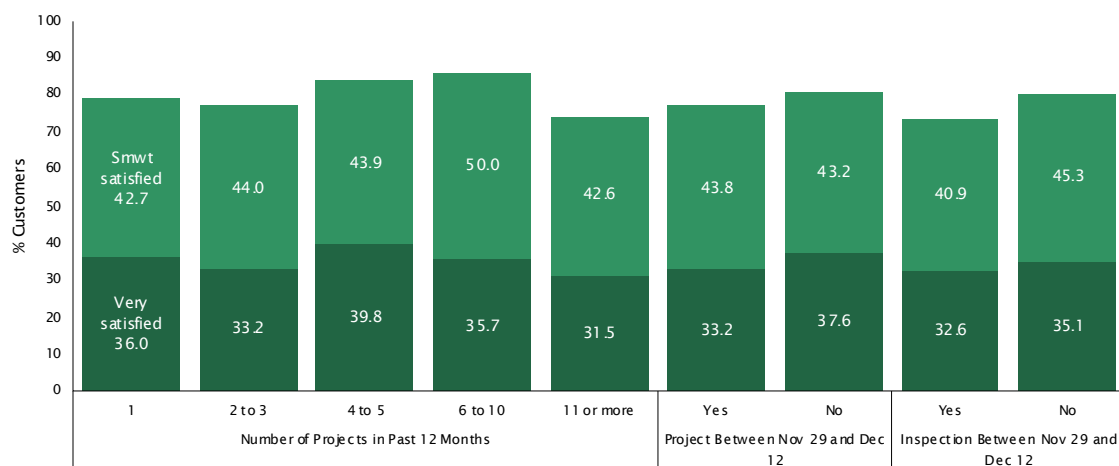


Figures 39-41 show how overall satisfaction with the Partners' efforts to make information available to customers varied in 2007 by the form of interview, their role in the project, property type, the number of projects they were involved with in the City of San José in 2007, whether they had a project active during the building inspectors' strike (Nov. 29-Dec.12), whether they had or tried to schedule an inspection during the building inspectors' strike, their involvement in various stages of their most recent project, and whether they had visited the Development Services website in the 12 months preceding the interview. Although satisfaction levels were reasonably consistent across ministerial subgroups, those who had visited the Development Services website, architects, engineers, and customers with six to ten projects in the past year expressed somewhat higher levels of satisfaction when compared to their respective counterparts.

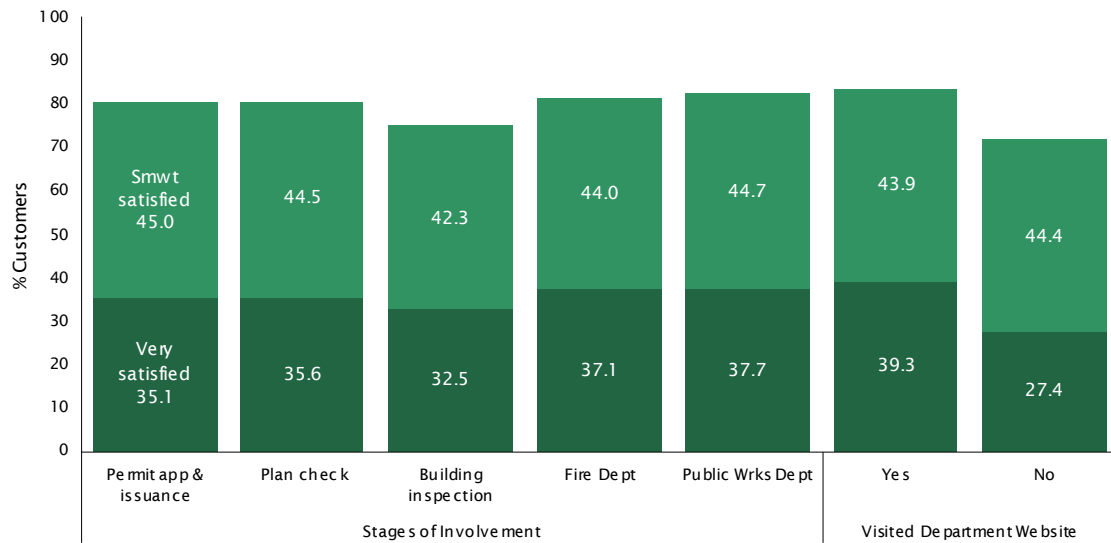
**FIGURE 39 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY FORM OF INTERVIEW, ROLE WITH PROJECT & PROPERTY TYPE: MINISTERIAL**



**FIGURE 40 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS, PROJECT BETWEEN NOV 29 AND DEC 12 & INSPECTION BETWEEN NOV 29 AND DEC 12: MINISTERIAL**



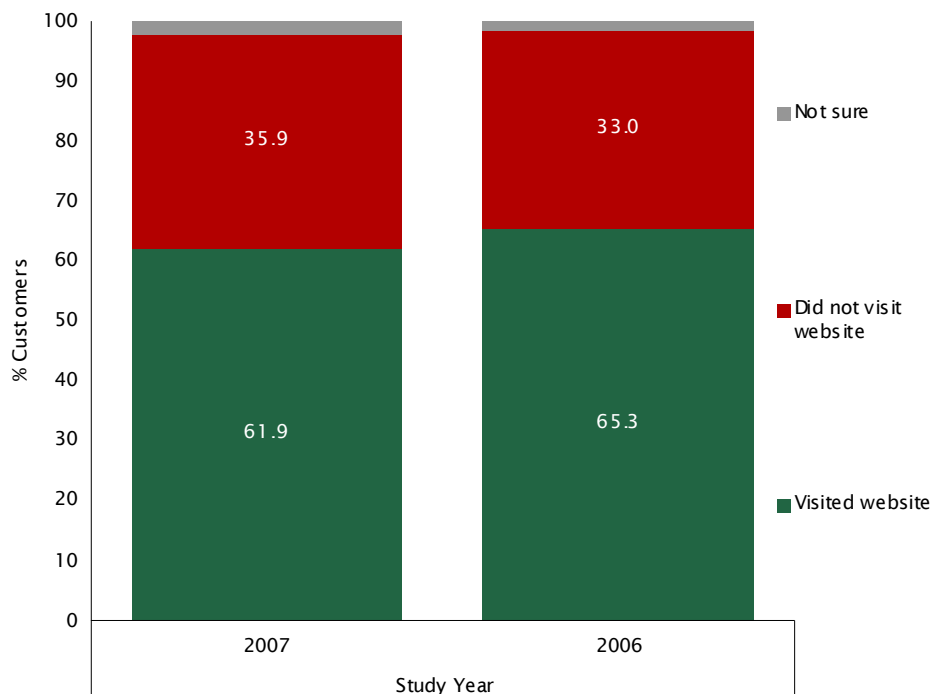
**FIGURE 41 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT& VISITED DEPARTMENT WEBSITE: MINISTERIAL**



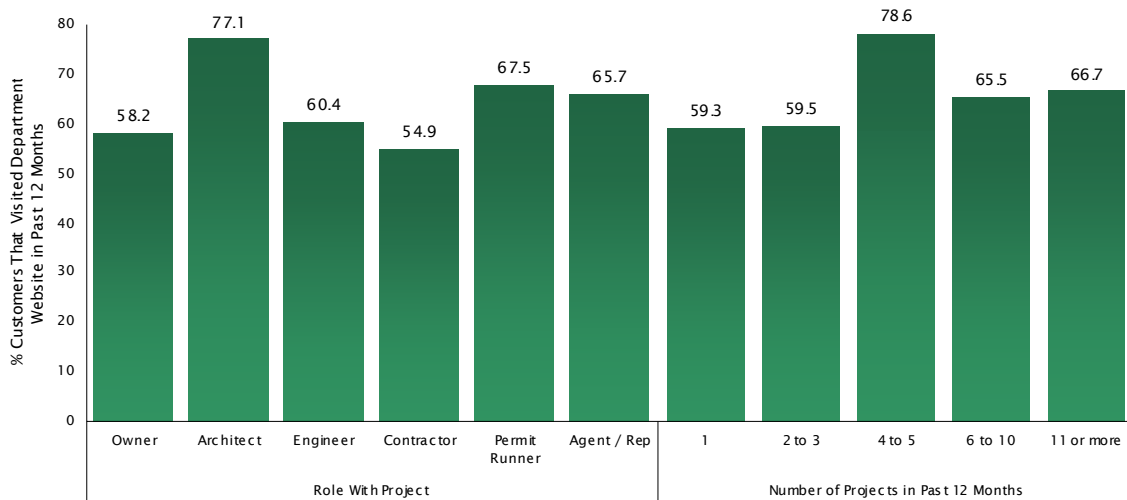
Approximately 62% of ministerial customers reported that they had visited the Development Services' website in the 12 months prior to the interview (see Figure 42), which is similar to the 2006 findings. When compared to their respective ministerial counterparts, visitation to the Development Services' website was most frequently reported by architects and customers who were associated with at least four to five projects in 2007 (see Figure 43).

**Question 14: Ministerial** *In the past 12 months, have you visited the City's Development Services web site?*

**FIGURE 42 WEBSITE VISIT IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

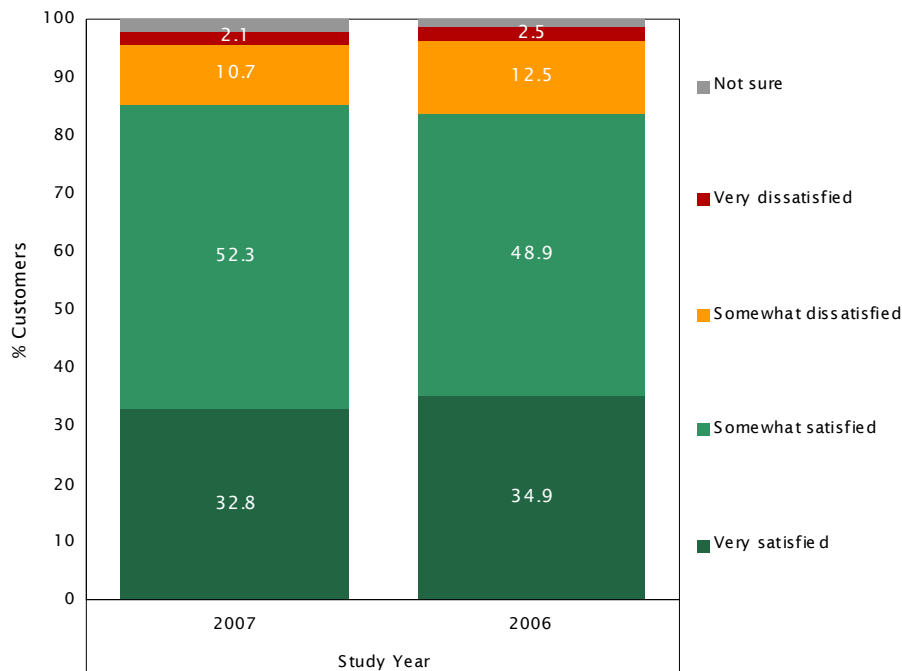


**FIGURE 43 WEBSITE VISIT IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY ROLE WITH PROJECT & NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS: MINISTERIAL**



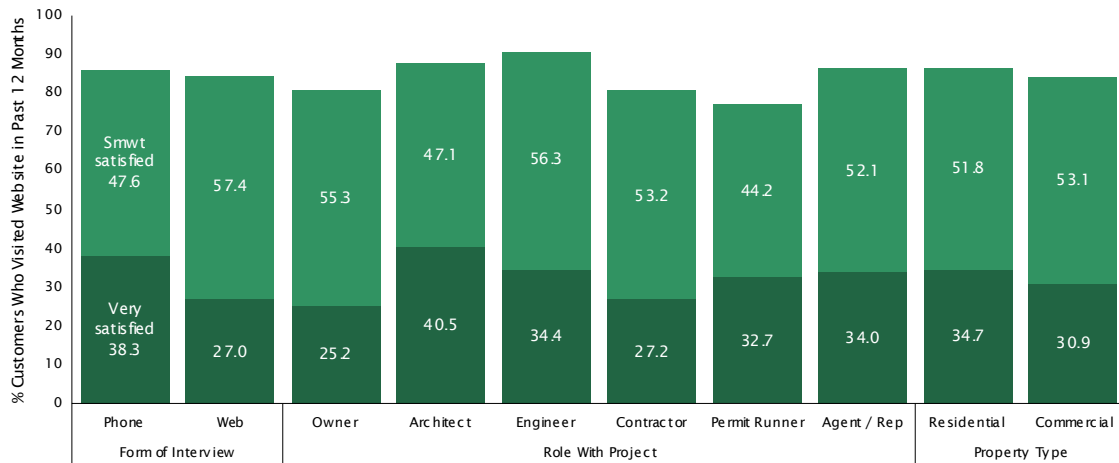
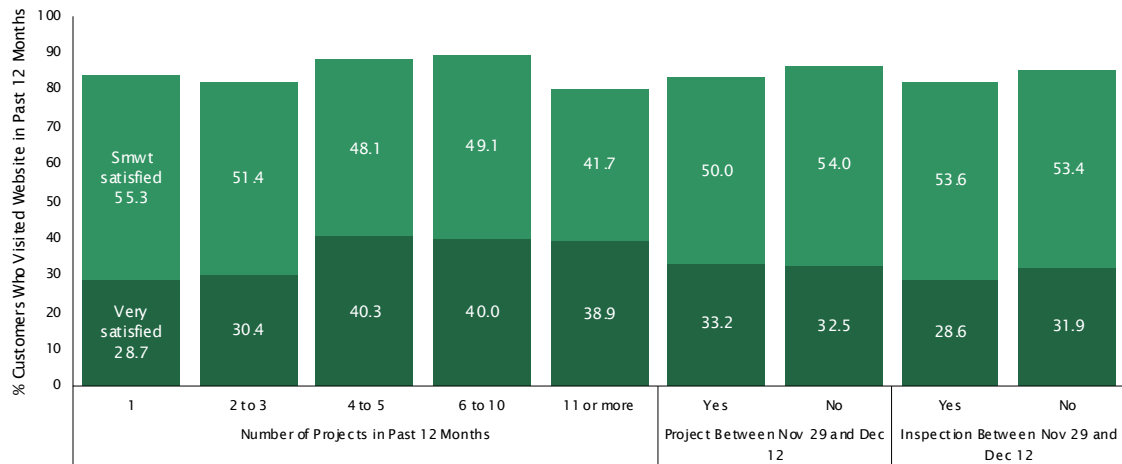
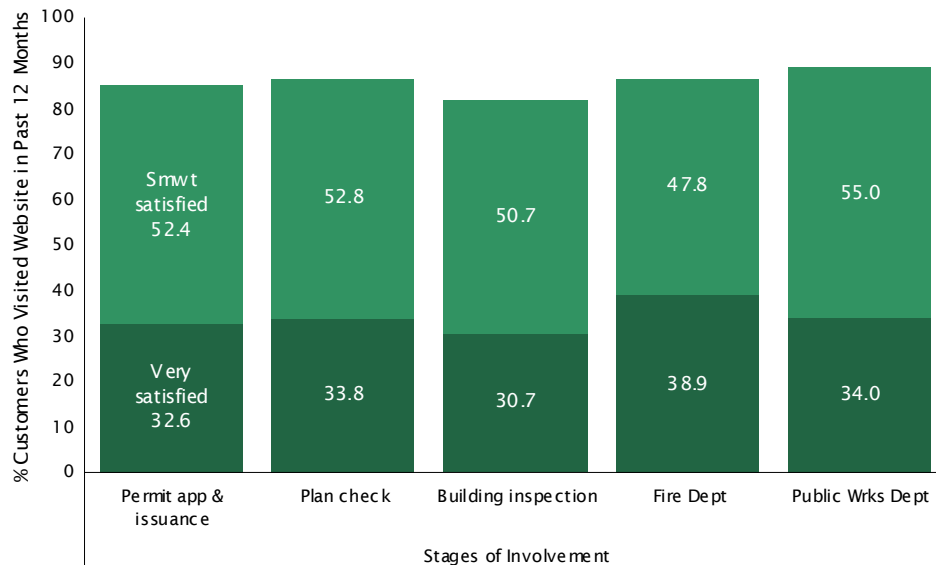
**Question 15: Ministerial** Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the content of the web site?

**FIGURE 44 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**



The final question in this series, which was asked only of customers who had visited the Development Services website in the 12 months prior to the interview, inquired as to whether the customer was satisfied or dissatisfied with the content of the website. Overall, 85% of ministerial customers indicated that they were satisfied with the content of the site in 2007, which is strikingly similar to the 2006 findings. For the interested reader, Figures 45-47 display how satisfaction with the content of the Development Services website varied by subgroups of ministerial customers.

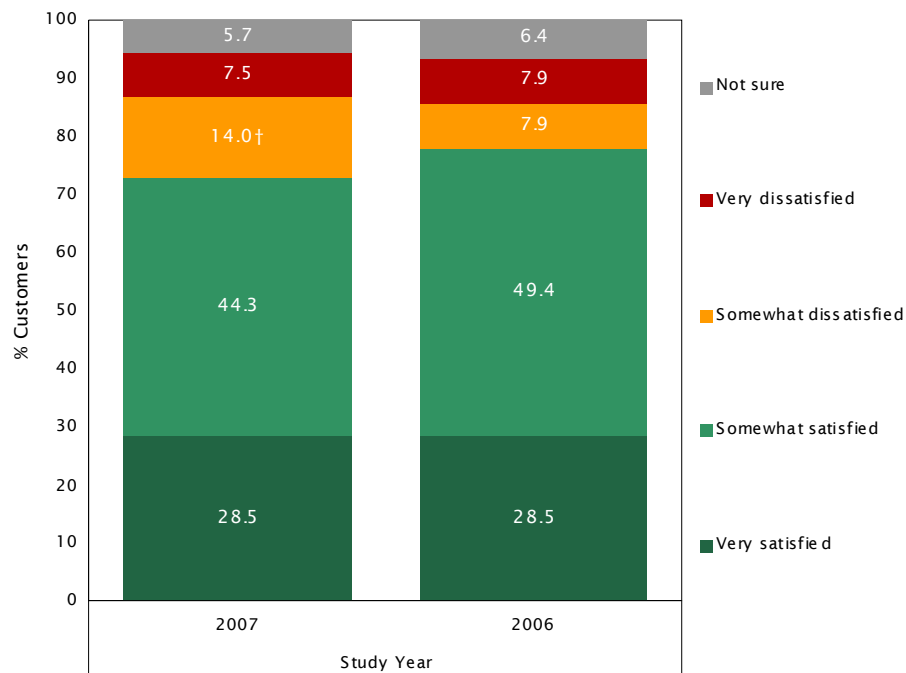
Figures 45-47 display how satisfaction with the content of the Development Services website varied by subgroups of ministerial customers.

**FIGURE 45 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY FORM OF INTERVIEW, ROLE WITH PROJECT & PROPERTY TYPE: MINISTERIAL****FIGURE 46 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS, PROJECT BETWEEN NOV 29 AND DEC 12 & INSPECTION BETWEEN NOV 29 AND DEC 12: MINISTERIAL****FIGURE 47 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT: MINISTERIAL**

**DISCRETIONARY** As shown in Figure 48, approximately three-quarters of discretionary customers indicated that they were either very satisfied (29%) or somewhat satisfied (44%) with the Partners' efforts to make information available to them in 2007. Among discretionary customers, those who participated in the study over the telephone, architects, those working on commercial projects, and customers with four to five projects in the City in 2007 were the most likely to express that they were satisfied in this respect (see Figures 49-51).

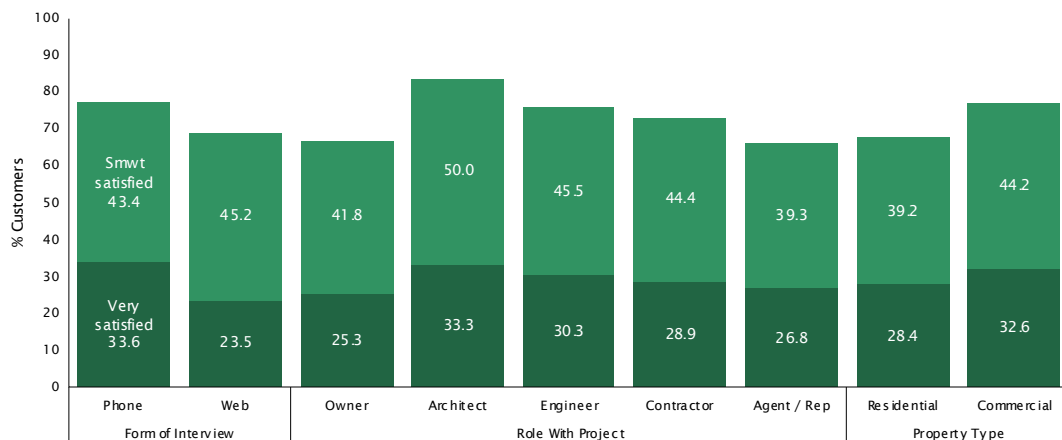
**Question 12: Discretionary** *For the remaining questions, please answer for the City of San José as a whole. Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to make development services information available through their web site, brochures and meetings?*

**FIGURE 48 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**



† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2006 and 2007 studies.

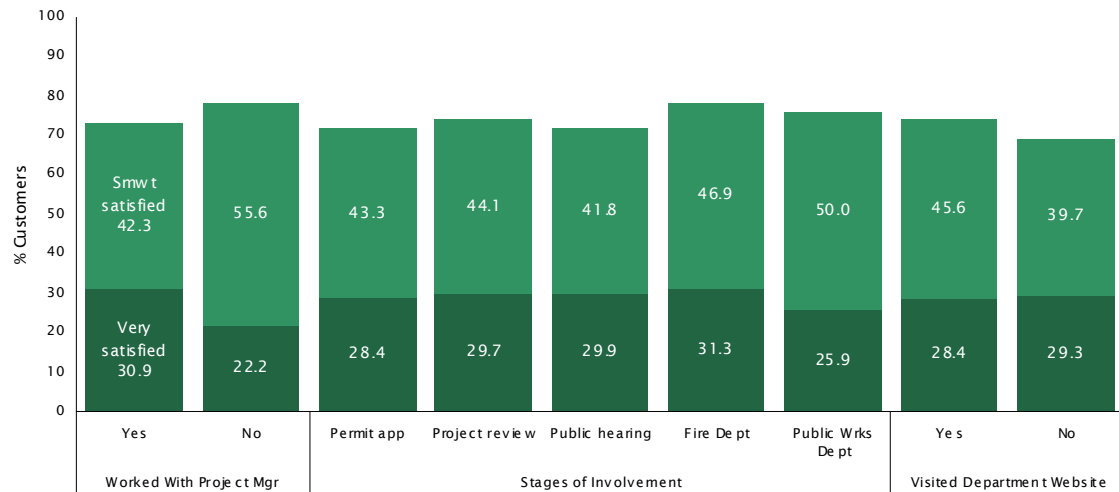
**FIGURE 49 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY FORM OF INTERVIEW, ROLE WITH PROJECT & PROPERTY TYPE: DISCRETIONARY**



**FIGURE 50 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS, PROJECT BETWEEN NOV 29 AND DEC 12 & INSPECTION BETWEEN NOV 29 AND DEC 12: DISCRETIONARY**



**FIGURE 51 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY WORKED WITH PROJECT MANAGER, STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT & VISITED DEPARTMENT WEBSITE: DISCRETIONARY**

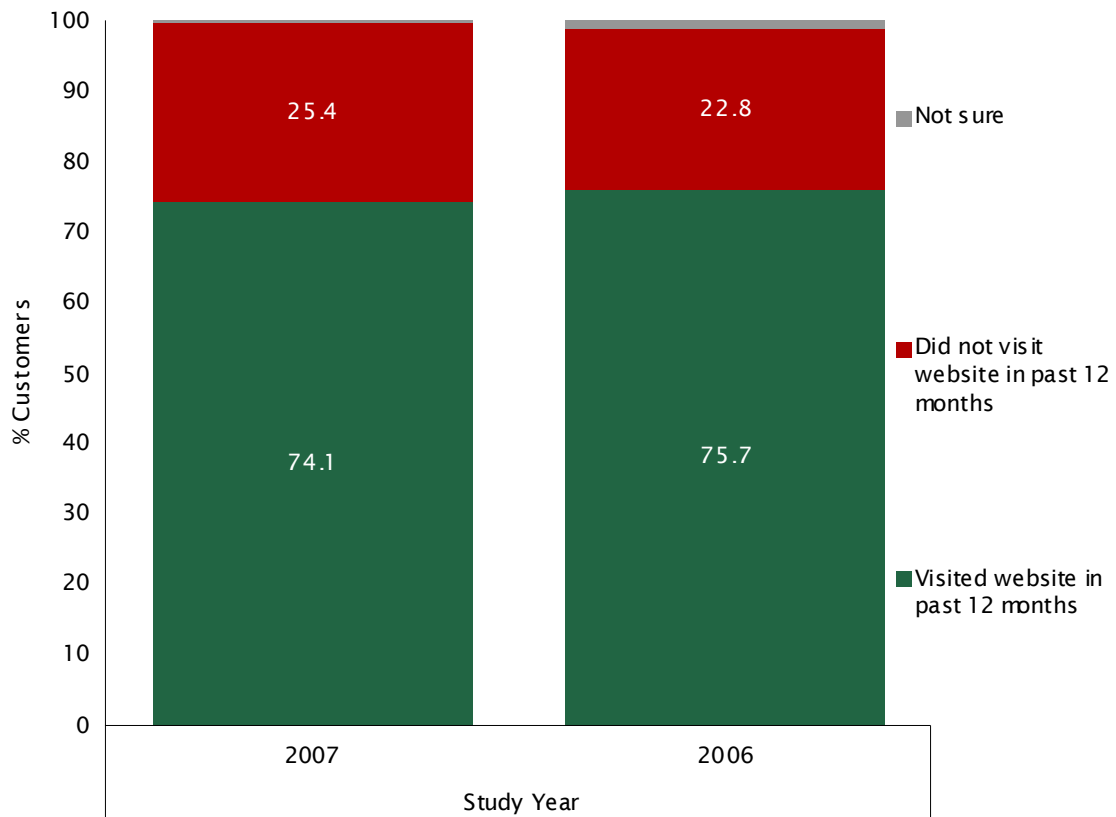


When compared to ministerial customers, the rate of visitation to the Development Services' website was notably higher among discretionary customers. Overall, approximately three-quarters (74%) of discretionary customers reported that they had visited the website in the 12 months prior to the interview (see Figure 52). Among discretionary customers, website visitation was most frequently reported by agent/representatives and those who were associated with four or more projects in 2007 (see Figure 53).

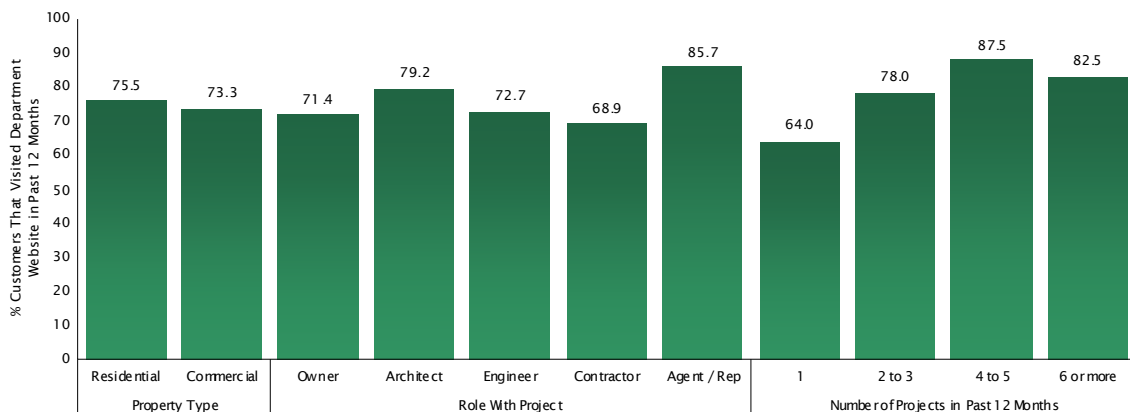


**Question 13: Discretionary** *In the past 12 months, have you visited the City's Development Services web site?*

**FIGURE 52 WEBSITE VISIT IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**



**FIGURE 53 WEBSITE VISIT IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY PROPERTY TYPE, ROLE WITH PROJECT & NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS**

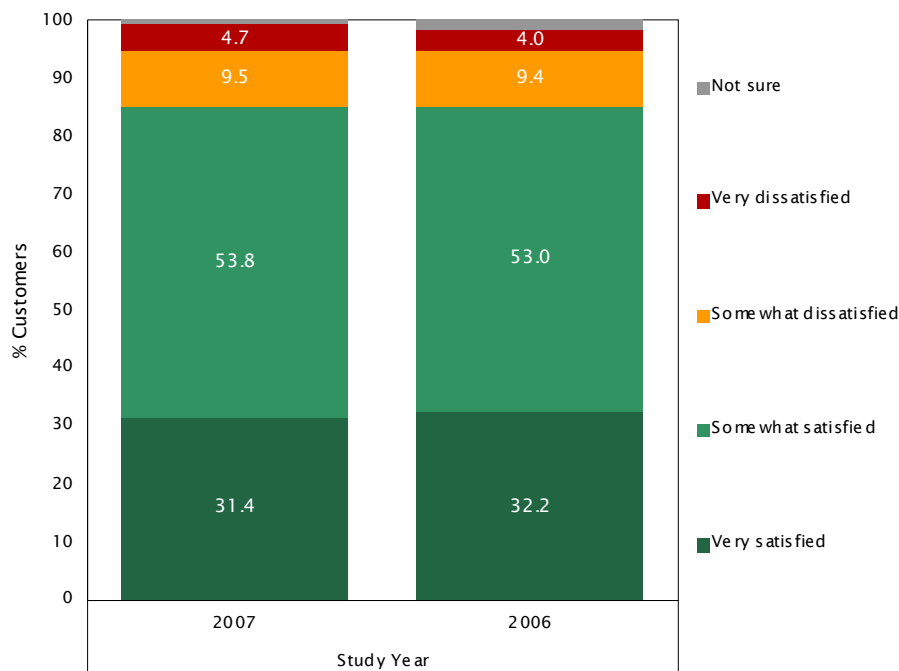


When compared to their ministerial counterparts, discretionary customers who had visited the Development Services' website were similarly pleased with the content of the site (see Figure 54). Overall, 85% reported that they were satisfied with the content of the site, with 31% stating that

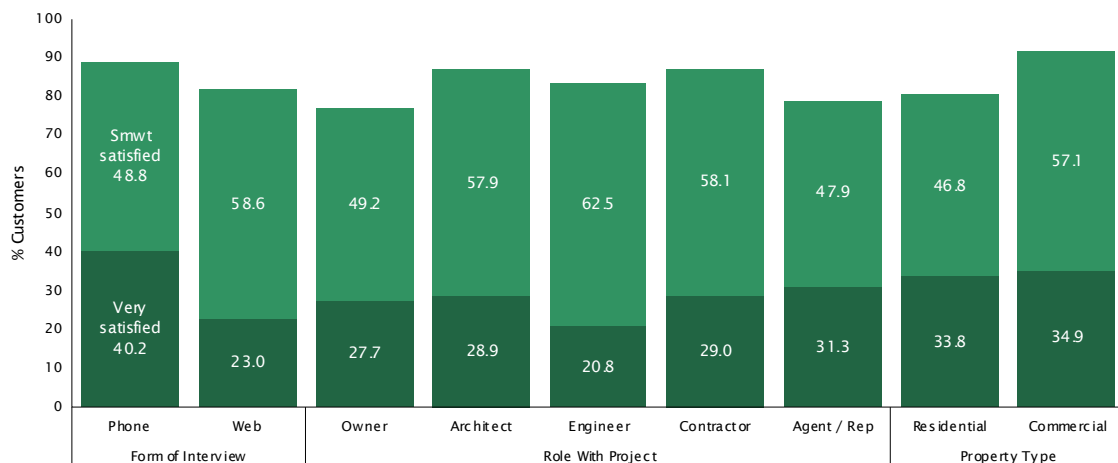
they were *very* satisfied. Approximately 14% indicated that they were dissatisfied with the site, and less than 1% were unsure. Although satisfaction with the content of the website was reasonably consistent across subgroups of discretionary customers, it is worth noting that those who participated in the survey over the telephone, architects, contractors, those whose most recent project was commercial in nature, customers who were associated with four to five projects in 2007, and those who had active projects, inspections, or tried to schedule an inspection during the building inspectors' strike were somewhat more likely than their respective counterparts to indicate that they were *very* satisfied with the content of the site (see Figures 55-57).

**Question 14: Discretionary** *Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the content of the web site?*

**FIGURE 54 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**



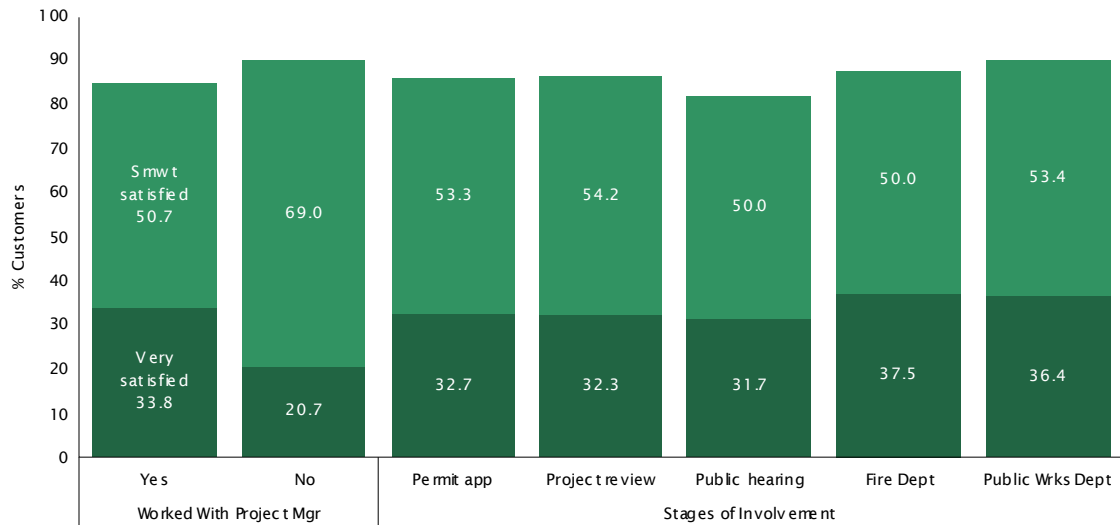
**FIGURE 55 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY FORM OF INTERVIEW, ROLE WITH PROJECT & PROPERTY TYPE: DISCRETIONARY**



**FIGURE 56 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS, PROJECT BETWEEN NOV 29 AND DEC 12 & INSPECTION BETWEEN NOV 29 AND DEC 12: DISCRETIONARY**



**FIGURE 57 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY WORKED WITH PROJECT MANAGER & STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT: DISCRETIONARY**



## SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

In addition to measuring customers' satisfaction with the Partners' *current* performance, a key goal of the study was to identify and prioritize ways that the Development Services Partners' can improve their performance in the future. Toward this end, the survey provided customers with an opportunity to express their ideas regarding how the City can improve the service that it provides in the area of development services. This question was asked in an open-ended manner, which allowed respondents to mention any improvement that came to mind without be prompted by, or restricted to, a particular list of options. True North later reviewed the verbatim responses and grouped them into the categories shown in Figure 58 for ministerial customers and Figure 59 for discretionary customers. Because respondents could mention up to two improvements, the percentages shown in the figures reflect the percentage of respondents who mentioned each improvement and thus sum to more than 100%.

**MINISTERIAL** The most common response to this question among ministerial customers in 2007 was 'not sure' (22%), followed by none/everything is fine (18%). Among the specific improvements suggested, decreasing turnaround times (8%), improving online access to information (8%), and clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees (6%) were the top suggestions.

**Question 16 Ministerial** *We'd like your ideas on how the City can improve the service that it provides in the area of development services. What one or two changes or improvements would you most like the City to make?*

FIGURE 58 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: MINISTERIAL

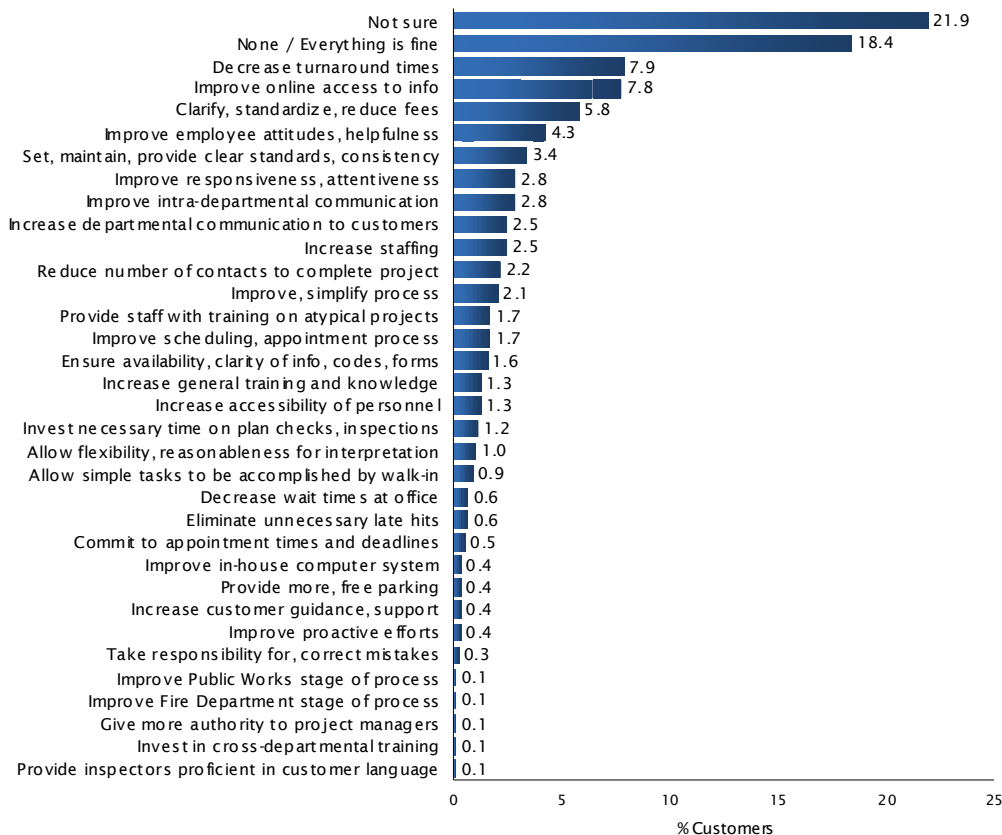


Table 24 displays the top 10 most frequently mentioned answers to Question 16 separately for ministerial customers who were generally satisfied with the Partners' overall performance (left column) and those who were generally dissatisfied (right column). Not surprisingly, those who were generally satisfied were most likely to indicate that no changes were needed or that no changes came to mind. The top specific improvements suggested by this group were improving online access to information, decreasing turnaround times, and clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees.

Ministerial customers who were generally dissatisfied with the Partners' performance focused on decreasing turnaround times, improving employee attitudes/helpfulness, and clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees.

**TABLE 24 TOP TEN SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: MINISTERIAL**

Overall Satisfaction (Q5)	
Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied
Not sure	Decrease turnaround times
None / Everything is fine	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness
Improve online access to info	Not sure
Decrease turnaround times	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees
Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	Provide staff with training on atypical projects
Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency
Improve responsiveness, attentiveness	Improve intra-departmental communication
Increase staffing	Improve online access to info
Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness	Improve, simplify process
Increase departmental communication to customers	Reduce number of contacts to complete project

For the interested reader, Table 25 on the next page shows the top 10 suggested improvements among ministerial customers in 2006 and 2007.

TABLE 25 TOP TEN SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL

Study Year	
2007	2006
Not sure	Not sure
None / Everything is fine	None / Everything is fine
Decrease turnaround times	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency
Improve online access to info	Improve, simplify process
Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	Improve intra-departmental communication
Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees
Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency	Improve online access to info
Improve intra-departmental communication	Ensure availability, clarity of info, codes, forms
Improve responsiveness, attentiveness	Decrease turnaround times
Increase departmental communication to customers	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness

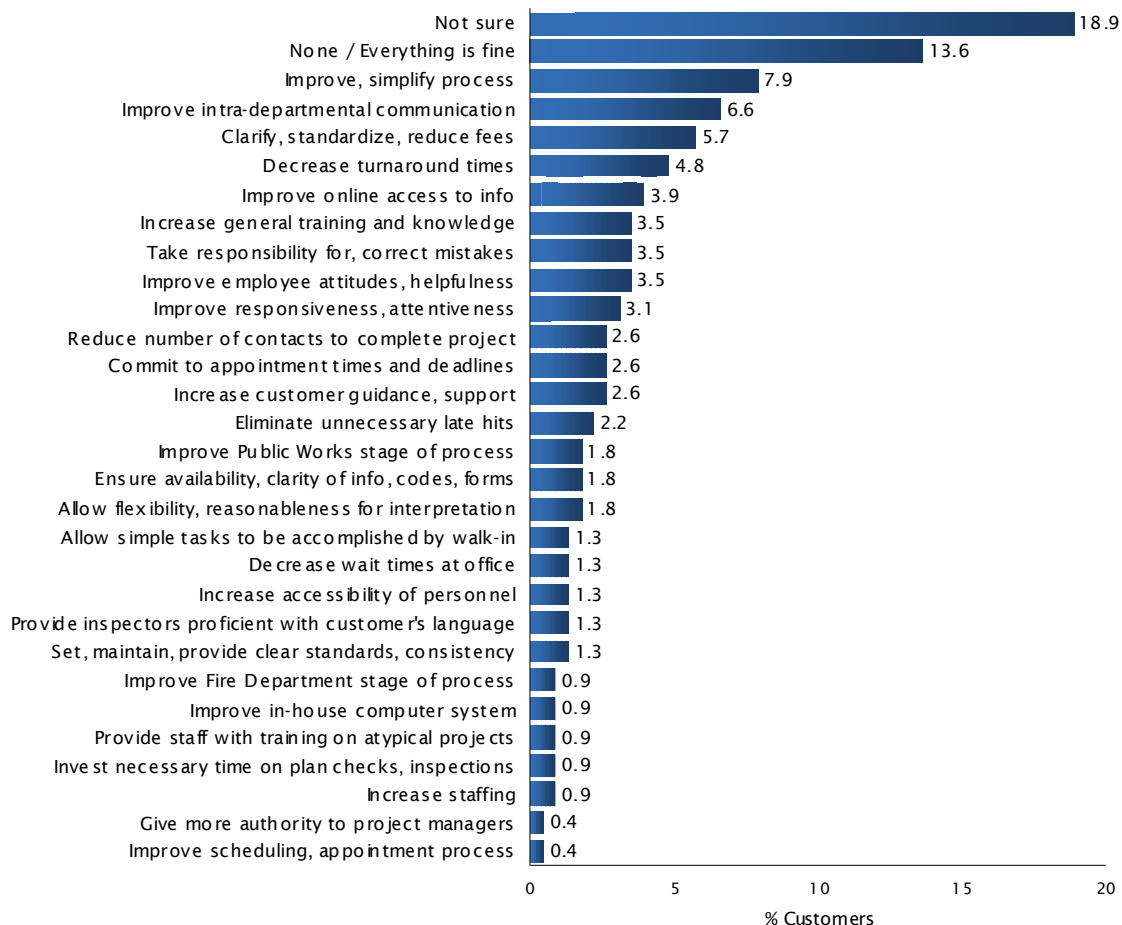
**DISCRETIONARY** The most common response to this question among discretionary customers in 2007 was ‘not sure’ (19%), followed by none/everything is fine (14%). Among the specific improvements suggested, improving/simplifying the process (8%), improving intra-departmental communication (7%), and clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees (6%) were the top suggestions.

Discretionary customers who were generally satisfied with the Partners’ overall performance were most likely to indicate that no changes were needed or that no changes came to mind (see Table 26). The top specific improvements suggested by this group were improving/simplifying the process, improving online access to information, and clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees. In contrast, discretionary customers who were generally dissatisfied with the Partners’ performance focused on improving intra-departmental communication, decreasing turnaround times, and increasing the general training and knowledge of staff.

For the interested reader, Table 27 shows the top 10 suggested improvements among discretionary customers in 2006 and 2007.

**Question 15: Discretionary** *We'd like your ideas on how the City can improve the service that it provides in the area of development services. What one or two changes or improvements would you most like the City to make?*

**FIGURE 59 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: DISCRETIONARY**



**TABLE 26 TOP TEN SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: DISCRETIONARY**

Overall Satisfaction (Q3)	
Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied
Not sure	Improve intra-departmental communication
None / Everything is fine	Decrease turnaround times
Improve, simplify process	Increase general training and knowledge
Improve online access to info	Not sure
Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	Improve, simplify process
Improve intra-departmental communication	Eliminate unnecessary late hits
Decrease turnaround times	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees
Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness	Increase customer guidance, support
Commit to appointment times and deadlines	Improve responsiveness, attentiveness
Take responsibility for, correct mistakes	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency

**TABLE 27 TOP TEN SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

Study Year	
2007	2006
Not sure	Not sure
None / Everything is fine	None / Everything is fine
Improve, simplify process	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency
Improve intra-departmental communication	Improve intra-departmental communication
Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	Improve online access to info
Decrease turnaround times	Decrease turnaround times
Improve online access to info	Improve responsiveness, attentiveness
Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness
Take responsibility for, correct mistakes	Ensure availability, clarity of info, codes, forms
Increase general training and knowledge	Provide staff with training on atypical projects



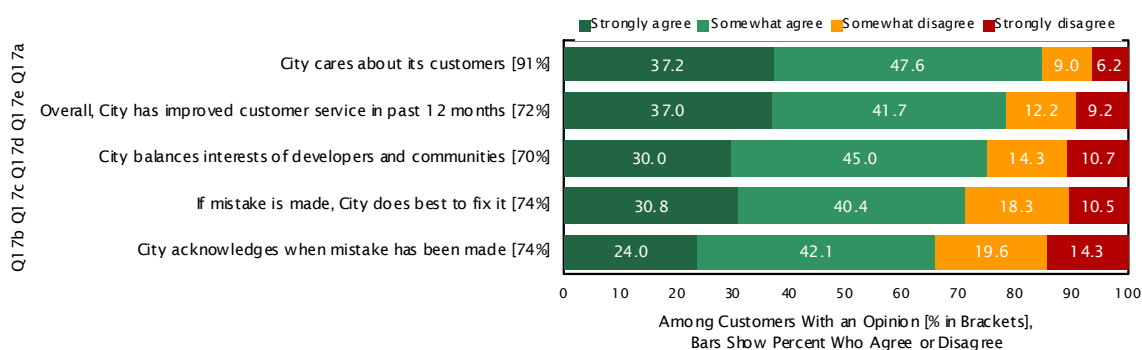
## PERCEPTIONS OF CITY

The final substantive section of the survey focused on customers' perceptions of the City of San José's Development Services Partners as an "agency". In a manner identical to that used in prior sections, customers were provided with five statements about the City and asked whether they agreed or disagreed with each statement as it applied to Development Services.

**MINISTERIAL** At least three-quarters of ministerial customers generally agreed that the City of San José's Development Services Partners' care about their customers (85%), have improved customer service in the past 12 months (79%), and do an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project (75%). Approximately two-thirds of ministerial customers perceived that the Partners' acknowledge a mistake when it has been made (66%), and do their best to fix a mistake when one occurs (71%).

**Question 17: Ministerial** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the City of San José I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement as they apply to development services. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 60 AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STATEMENTS: MINISTERIAL**



When compared to 2006, there were no statistically significant changes in 2007 in responses to the performance-related statements tested in Question 17 among ministerial customers (Table 28).

**TABLE 28 AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
City cares about its customers	84.8	81.8	+3.0
Overall, City has improved customer service in past 12 months	78.6	78.1	+0.5
City acknowledges when mistake has been made	66.1	65.7	+0.4
City balances interests of developers and communities	75.0	74.8	+0.2
If mistake is made, City does best to fix it	71.3	71.2	+0.0

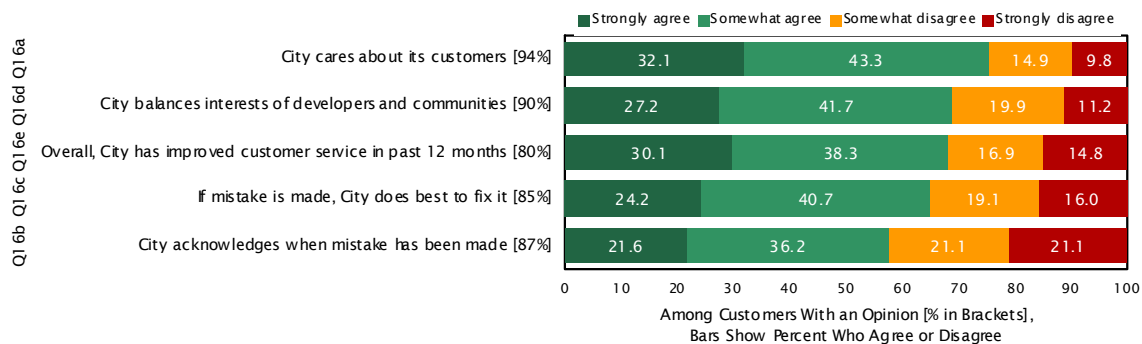
Consistent with the pattern found throughout this study, ministerial customers who were generally satisfied with the Partners' overall performance were much more likely to hold positive opinions of the Partners' performance on each of the dimensions tested in Question 17 when compared to their counterparts (Table 29).

**TABLE 29 AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: MINISTERIAL**

	Overall Satisfaction (Q5)		Difference Between Groups
	Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
Overall, City has improved customer service in past 12 months	89.8	35.4	54.4
If mistake is made, City does best to fix it	82.2	32.5	49.6
City cares about its customers	93.4	47.7	45.7
City acknowledges when mistake has been made	76.1	30.7	45.4
City balances interests of developers and communities	84.3	39.3	45.1

**DISCRETIONARY** Opinions of the Partners' were somewhat less positive among discretionary customers (Figure 61). Approximately three-quarters of discretionary customers generally agreed that the City of San José's Development Services Partners' care about their customers (75%). Approximately two-thirds agreed that the Partners do an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project (69%), and have improved customer service in the past 12 months (68%). However, the proportion who felt that the Partners' acknowledge a mistake when it has been made (58%) and do their best to fix a mistake when one occurs (65%) was somewhat lower.

**Question 16: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the City of San José I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement as they apply to development services. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 61 AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**


When compared to 2006, there were no statistically significant changes in 2007 in responses to the performance-related statements tested in Question 16 among discretionary customers (Table 30).

**TABLE 30 AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year		Difference in Agreement 06 to 07
	2007	2006	
City acknowledges when mistake has been made	57.8	52.3	+5.5
Overall, City has improved customer service in past 12 months	68.3	63.3	+5.0
If mistake is made, City does best to fix it	64.9	60.2	+4.8
City balances interests of developers and communities	68.9	69.0	-0.0
City cares about its customers	75.3	77.3	-2.0

Like their ministerial counterparts, discretionary customers' opinions of the Partners' overall performance were strongly related to their stated opinions in response to Question 16. Those who held positive views of the Partners' overall performance were much more likely to also positively assess the Partners' performance on each of the dimensions tested in Question 16 (Table 31).

**TABLE 31 AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: DISCRETIONARY**

	Overall Satisfaction (Q3)		Difference Between Groups
	Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
Overall, City has improved customer service in past 12 months	85.2	33.3	51.9
City cares about its customers	89.7	45.6	44.1
City balances interests of developers and communities	81.6	41.3	40.3
City acknowledges when mistake has been made	70.8	33.8	36.9
If mistake is made, City does best to fix it	77.8	41.8	36.0



## M E T H O D O L O G Y

The following sections outline the methodology used in the study, as well as the motivation for using certain techniques.

**QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT** Dr. McLarney of True North Research worked closely with senior management from the City of San José's Development Services Partners to develop questionnaires that covered the topics of interest and avoided the many possible sources of systematic measurement error, including position-order effects, wording effects, response-category effects, scaling effects and priming. Many of the questions asked in this survey were presented only to a subset of respondents. For example, customers who were not personally involved in the plan review stage were not asked questions pertaining to plan review. The questionnaires included with this report (see *Questionnaires & Toplines* on page 80) identify the skip patterns that were used during the interview to ensure that each respondent received the appropriate questions.

Because experiences and interactions with the Development Services Partners differ considerably between customers involved in the *ministerial* process and those involved in the *discretionary* process, two questionnaires were created and utilized in the study. In the introduction to the survey, respondents were asked if their most recent project was ministerial or discretionary. For those who were uncertain, the interviewer clarified that most projects are ministerial and as long as they comply with the Municipal Code they have to be approved and don't require a public hearing. Discretionary projects, on the other hand, require a public hearing and its approval may depend on the discretion of a committee. Respondents who were still uncertain after that clarification were identified as ministerial customers, as a discretionary customer would most likely be aware if his or her project was considered discretionary.

**PROGRAMMING** Prior to fielding the surveys, the questionnaires were CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) programmed to assist the live interviewers when conducting the telephone interviews, as well as web programmed to allow online participation. Both programs automatically navigate skip patterns, randomize appropriate question items, and prevent certain types of keypunching mistakes. The integrity of the questionnaires was pre-tested internally by True North prior to formally commencing the interviewing.

**SAMPLE** The sample for this study was drawn from the City's AMANDA permit database. All customers who were associated with at least one permit between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2007 comprised the universe for the study. Because the focus of the study was on customers, and because some customers appeared on multiple permits, the data was reorganized by customer identity (rather than by permit). Fields were also derived that indicated how many permits a customer was associated with during the period of interest, as well as the types of permits—building, planning, fire and public works. The universe of customers was then stratified by the number of permits a customer was associated with during this period, and by permit type, prior to selection.

During the sample development phase, it was discovered that occasionally a customer would appear in the database multiple times due to slightly different spellings of their name, changes of address, or other minor differences in their contact information. True North manually

reviewed the original file of 6,894 records to identify records that should be combined into a single record or eliminated due to inadequate or invalid contact information. When combined, the permit information was summed by customer so that the number of permits associated with a customer was accurate. In instances where the physical address or phone contact information differed, however, records were not combined.<sup>8</sup> A total of 609 records were eliminated and/or combined through this process.

**RECRUITMENT AND DATA COLLECTION** True North used multiple methods to both recruit and encourage participation in the survey. Customers were mailed hardcopy letters that invited them to participate in the study either online at a secure website or by telephone. If the database included an email address for a customer, they were also sent an invitation via email that would allow them to link directly to the survey website. Reminder emails were sent, as appropriate, to encourage participation among those who had yet to take the survey. Each customer was assigned a unique personal identification number (PIN), which prevented outsiders from participating in the survey and ensured that customers' completed the survey only once.

A total of 772 ministerial interviews and 228 discretionary interviews were gathered between January 17 to February 12, 2008. Of the completed interviews, approximately half (52%) were completed online. Telephone interviews were conducted during normal business hours, and the average interview was 14 minutes for ministerial customers and 13 minutes for discretionary customers.

**MARGIN OF ERROR** By using a probability-based sampling design and monitoring the sample characteristics as data collection proceeded, True North ensured that the resulting sample was representative of the universe of customers serviced by the Development Services Partners in the year prior to the study. The results of the sample can thus be used to estimate the opinions of *all* customers during this period. Because not every customer participated in the survey, however, the results have what is known as a statistical margin of error due to sampling. The margin of error refers to the difference between what was found in the survey of 772 ministerial and 228 discretionary customers, and what would have been found if all of the estimated 4,852 ministerial and 1,433 discretionary customers had been surveyed for the study.

For example, in estimating the percentage of ministerial customers that visited the City's Development Services website in the past 12 months (Question 14 of the ministerial version), the margin of error can be calculated if one knows the size of the population, the size of the sample, a desired confidence level, and the distribution of responses to the question. The appropriate equation for estimating the margin of error, in this case, is shown below:

$$\hat{p} \pm t \sqrt{\left(\frac{N-n}{N}\right) \frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n-1}}$$

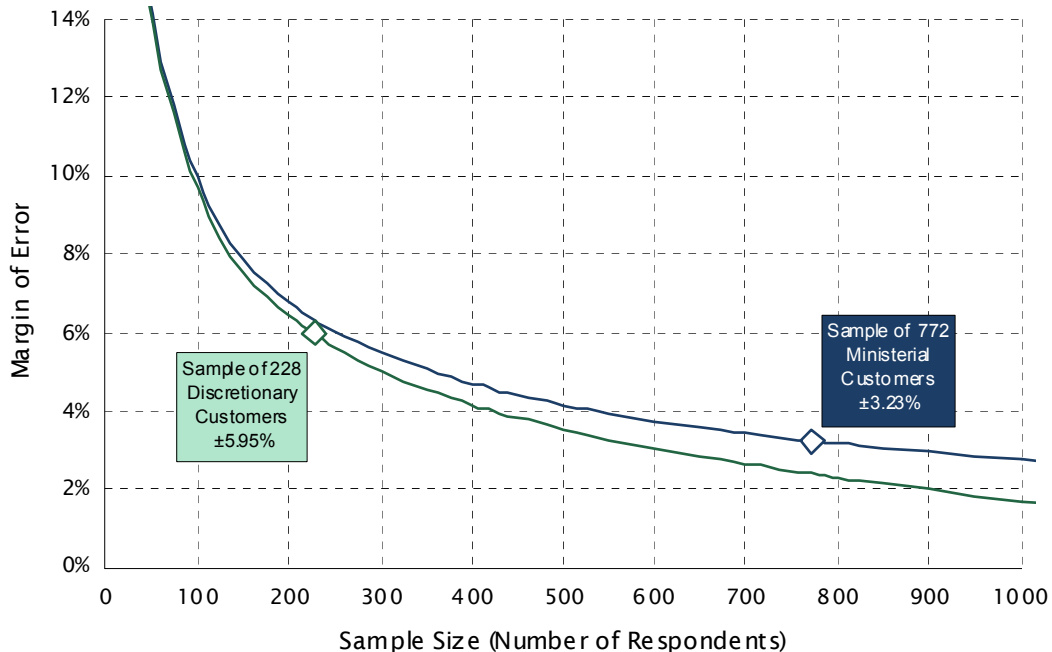
Where  $\hat{p}$  is the proportion of customers who visited the City's Development Services website in the past 12 months (0.62 for 62%, for example),  $N$  is the population (universe) size of ministerial customers (4,852),  $n$  is the sample size that received the question (772), and  $t$  is the upper

8. It was assumed that this may indicate that a customer moved office locations and to avoid missing the customer an invitation was sent to both locations.

$\alpha/2$  point for the t-distribution with  $n - 1$  degrees of freedom (1.96 for a 95% confidence interval). Solving this equation using the values just discussed reveals a margin of error of  $\pm 3.14\%$ . This means that, with 62% of ministerial respondents indicating they visited the City's Development Services website in the past 12 months, we can be 95 percent confident that the actual percentage of *all* ministerial customers who visited the City's Development Services website during that period is between 59% and 65%.

Figure 62 presents the margin of error equation as a graph, plotting sample sizes along the bottom axis. There are two lines represented in the graph—one for the ministerial version of the survey and one for the discretionary version. As seen in the figure, the maximum margin of error in the ministerial version for questions answered by all 772 respondents is  $\pm 3.23\%$ , whereas the maximum margin of error in the discretionary version for questions answered by all 267 respondents is  $\pm 5.95\%$ . For questions answered by fewer respondents within each version, the margin of error increases accordingly.

**FIGURE 62 APPROXIMATE MAXIMUM MARGIN OF ERROR DUE TO SAMPLING**



Within this report, figures and tables show how responses to certain questions varied by customer characteristics such as the number of projects the respondent had worked on in the past 12 months and the stages in which they were involved for their most recent project. Figure 62 is thus useful for understanding how the maximum margin of error for a percentage estimate will grow as the number of customers asked a question (or in a particular subgroup) shrinks. Because the margin of error grows exponentially as the sample size decreases, the reader should use caution when generalizing and interpreting the results for small subgroups.

**DATA PROCESSING** Data processing consisted of checking the data for errors or inconsistencies, coding and recoding responses, categorizing open-end responses, and preparing frequency analyses.

**ROUNDING** Numbers that end in 0.5 or higher are rounded up to the nearest whole number, whereas numbers that end in 0.4 or lower are rounded down to the nearest whole number. These same rounding rules are also applied, when needed, to arrive at numbers that include a decimal place in constructing figures and charts. Occasionally, these rounding rules lead to small discrepancies in the first decimal place when comparing tables and pie charts for a given question.

**DISPARITIES BETWEEN TOPLINE RESULTS AND FIGURES IN REPORT** Throughout this report, all figures that show levels of agreement in percentage form are drawn only from those customers who provided an opinion. This allows for a more direct and meaningful comparison of responses across the statements tested since the number of respondents who answered “not sure” or “doesn't apply or refused” varies substantially by question.

Readers who wish to view the percentages for all possible responses, including “not sure” and “doesn't apply or refused,” can review the questionnaires at the end of the report which contain the percentage results for each question inclusive all response options. For example, Question 8L in the ministerial questionnaire shows that 80% of *all* customers were very or somewhat satisfied with the service they received during the inspection stage of the process. However, this percentage changes to 85% when the customers who did not have an opinion are removed from the analysis and the percentages are recalculated among just those who expressed an opinion in response to the question.

# QUESTIONNAIRES & TOPLINES

## MINISTERIAL VERSION



City of San Jose Development Services  
2008 Customer Satisfaction Survey  
Final Toplines: Ministerial (n = 772)

### Section 1: Introduction to Study

Hi, may I please speak to: \_\_\_\_\_. Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling from True North Research on behalf of the City of San Jose. I'm following up on a letter you should have received a few weeks ago from the City which invited you to participate in a customer survey regarding development services. Our records indicate that you have yet to take the survey over the Internet, so we'd like to ask you a few questions over the telephone.

*If needed:* We're conducting a brief and confidential survey of people who have received building permit, plan check and inspection services from the City of San Jose.

*If needed:* Your name and contact information was included on a recent permit application for the City of San Jose—which is why we'd like to ask you about your experience.

*If needed:* The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete.

*If needed:* If now is not a convenient time, can you let me know a better time so I can call back?

*If needed:* You are also welcome to participate in the survey online, as described in the invitation letter we recently sent you.

*If needed:* Your answers will be kept anonymous and will be combined with the answers of other people who participate in the survey.

### Section 2: Screener for Inclusion in the Study

SC1	Our records indicate that you worked with the City of San Jose on at least one project during the past 12 months. Is this correct?			
	1	Yes	100%	Continue
	2	No	0%	Terminate
	99	Refused	0%	Terminate
SC2	<p>Was your most recent project ministerial (mini-steer-ee-al) or discretionary? <i>If unsure, clarify:</i> Most projects are ministerial projects. As long as they comply with the Municipal Code, they have to be approved. Ministerial projects do not involve a public hearing.</p> <p>A discretionary project is a project that requires a public hearing related to a conditional use permit or zone change. Even if the project complies with the Municipal Code, the decision-makers still have some discretion in deciding whether to approve the project.</p>			
	1	Ministerial	Stay with Ministerial Version of Q	
	2	Discretionary	Switch to Discretionary Version of Q	
	98	Not sure	Stay with Ministerial Version of Q	
	99	Refused	Terminate	
SC3	For your most recent project, were you personally involved in the: _____ stage of the project?			
Do Not Randomize			Yes	No
			Not sure	
A	Permit application and issuance		89%	11%
B	Plan check		79%	19%
C	Building inspection		49%	50%
If SC3a = (2, 99), SC3b = (2, 99) AND SC3c = (2, 99) then terminate interview.				



**Section 3: Overall Satisfaction**

In answering the questions in this survey, I'd like you to focus on your experience with your most recent project with the City.

**Q1** Which of the following best describes your role on this project? *Multiple responses allowed.*

1	Owner	23%
2	Architect	20%
3	Engineer	14%
4	Contractor	41%
5	Permit Runner	10%
6	Agent/Representative	19%
7	Other	4%
98	Not sure	0%
99	Refused	0%

**Q2** Was your most recent project for a residential property, a commercial property, or a mixed use property?

1	Residential	39%	Ask Q3
2	Commercial	54%	Skip to Q4
3	Mixed use	5%	Skip to Q4
98	Not sure	1%	Skip to Q5
99	Refused	0%	Skip to Q5

**Q3** Which of the following best describes the nature of your project?

1	New construction	21%
2	Remodel or addition	55%
3	Demolition or Re-build	8%
4	Re-roof	2%
5	Re-pipe	0%
6	Hot water heater	2%
7	Pool related	2%
8	Other	10%
98	Not sure	0%
99	Refused	0%

*Skip to Q5.*

Q4	Which of the following best describes the nature of your project?		
	1	New construction	18%
	2	Tenant Improvement	50%
	3	Demolition or Re-build	6%
	4	Permit for occupancy	1%
	5	Re-roof	1%
	6	AC/HVAC	2%
	7	Sign Permit	5%
	8	Other	11%
	9	Fire Protection Systems	2%
	10	Hazardous Materials Systems	3%
	98	Not sure	0%
	99	Refused	0%
Q5	Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the service that you received from the City of San Jose on this project? <i>Get answer, then ask: Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?</i>		
	1	Very Satisfied	45%
	2	Somewhat Satisfied	34%
	3	Somewhat Dissatisfied	10%
	4	Very Dissatisfied	9%
	98	Not sure	1%
	99	Refused	1%

#### Section 4: Permit Application & Issuance Stage

Only ask questions in this section if SC3a = 1. Otherwise, skip to instructions for Section 5.

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the Building permit application and issuance stage of the process. I'd like you to tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.

Q6	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then ask: Would that be strongly or somewhat (agree/disagree)?</i>						
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The process and steps needed to obtain a permit were clearly communicated	40%	37%	11%	9%	0%	2%
B	You received clear and correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit	49%	31%	11%	6%	0%	2%

C	You received a clear explanation of the fees, taxes and deposits	47%	26%	11%	9%	3%	5%
D	The fees and taxes were assessed accurately	40%	26%	7%	7%	13%	7%
E	When you visited the permit counter, the amount of time that you had to wait before being assisted by staff was reasonable	48%	36%	6%	5%	1%	4%
F	The permit counter staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	58%	27%	6%	4%	1%	4%
G	The staff at the permit application counter were accessible	56%	31%	6%	3%	1%	4%
H	The staff at the permit application counter were responsive	57%	28%	7%	3%	1%	4%
I	The staff at the permit application counter were courteous	68%	23%	3%	2%	0%	4%
J	The staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	51%	32%	8%	5%	0%	4%
K	The staff at the permit application counter were helpful	59%	29%	5%	3%	1%	4%
L	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received during the permit application stage of the process	50%	32%	9%	5%	1%	2%

**Section 5: Plan Check**

*Only ask questions in this section if SC3b = 1. Otherwise, skip to instructions for Section 6.*

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the Building plan check process. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.

**Q7** Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? *Get answer, then ask: Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?*

	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The plan check comments and corrections were clear and understandable	44%	36%	8%	4%	1%	6%
B	The plan check comments and corrections were based on reasonable interpretations of the code	42%	36%	8%	6%	2%	6%
C	The plan check comments and corrections made sense for the project	41%	33%	11%	7%	2%	6%
D	The plan check comments and corrections were consistent—there were no contradictions	43%	33%	11%	5%	2%	6%
E	Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time—there were no late hits	42%	30%	9%	9%	3%	7%
F	There was adequate communication among City staff about the project during the plan check	42%	30%	10%	9%	4%	5%
G	The number of plan rechecks was reasonable	43%	30%	9%	7%	3%	8%

H	The plan check staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	49%	29%	10%	8%	2%	3%
I	The plan check staff were responsive	51%	30%	8%	6%	1%	3%
J	The plan check staff were courteous	61%	29%	4%	2%	1%	4%
K	The plan check staff were knowledgeable	54%	32%	6%	4%	1%	3%
L	The plan check staff were helpful	55%	28%	7%	4%	2%	4%
M	The turn-around time set by the City for plan check was reasonable	40%	30%	13%	11%	2%	5%
N	The plan check process was completed by the target date set by the City	38%	27%	11%	10%	6%	8%
O	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received during the plan check stage	44%	32%	11%	8%	1%	3%

#### Section 6: Inspections

Only ask questions in this section if SC3c = 1. Otherwise, skip to instructions for Section 7.

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the building inspection process. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.

Q8 Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? *Get answer, then:* Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?

	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	If an appointment was made, the inspectors arrived on time	49%	31%	7%	4%	2%	6%
B	The inspectors only requested a change if it was required to meet code	45%	28%	9%	7%	2%	9%
C	The inspectors only requested a change if it made sense for the project	39%	29%	11%	8%	3%	10%
D	Written notices and corrections were clear and understandable	49%	32%	7%	3%	2%	7%
E	If more than one inspector worked on the project, their notices and corrections were consistent.	34%	29%	12%	10%	3%	12%
F	Inspectors' comments were consistent with those of plan check staff	34%	32%	12%	7%	6%	9%
G	The inspectors made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	43%	34%	8%	7%	2%	6%
H	The inspectors were responsive	52%	30%	6%	5%	2%	6%
I	The inspectors were courteous	56%	31%	4%	2%	2%	5%
J	The inspectors were knowledgeable	53%	32%	5%	2%	2%	4%
K	The inspectors were helpful	50%	33%	6%	4%	3%	5%
L	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received during the inspection stage of the process	48%	32%	9%	6%	2%	4%

Section 7: Fire								
Q9	In the past six months, did one or more of your projects require a permit, project review or inspection from San Jose's Fire Department?							
	1	Yes	41%	Ask Q10				
	2	No	51%	Skip to Q11				
	98	Not sure	7%	Skip to Q11				
	99	Refused	1%	Skip to Q11				
Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San Jose's Fire Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Fire Department.								
Q10	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?							
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>		Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated by Fire Department staff		49%	30%	11%	4%	3%	5%
B	The plan check comments and corrections were clear and understandable		54%	27%	8%	4%	3%	4%
C	The plan review comments and corrections were consistent—there were no contradictions		53%	28%	7%	5%	3%	4%
D	Any plan review to be coordinated with other Departments was done so in a seamless manner		42%	28%	12%	8%	4%	6%
E	When you visited the counter, the amount of time that you had to wait before being assisted by Fire Department staff was reasonable		49%	25%	4%	1%	5%	15%
F	Fire Department staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer		55%	29%	3%	2%	3%	8%
G	Fire Department staff were responsive		57%	26%	5%	2%	3%	6%
H	Fire Department staff were courteous		64%	24%	2%	1%	3%	7%
I	Fire Department staff were knowledgeable		61%	25%	2%	2%	3%	6%
J	Fire Department staff were helpful		61%	24%	3%	2%	4%	7%
K	The turn-around time set by the Fire Department for plan review was reasonable		47%	26%	8%	8%	5%	6%
L	The plan review process was completed by the target date set by the Fire Department		48%	23%	7%	7%	7%	8%
M	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received from the Fire Department		53%	31%	7%	3%	3%	3%

Section 8: Public Works								
Q11	In the past six months, did one or more of your projects require a permit, project review or inspection from San Jose's Public Works Department?							
	1	Yes	21%		Ask Q12			
	2	No	71%		Skip to Q13			
	98	Not sure	7%		Skip to Q13			
	99	Refused	1%		Skip to Q13			
Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San Jose's Public Works Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Public Works Department.								
Q12	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then:</i> Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?							
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>		Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated by Public Works Department staff		42%	31%	8%	10%	3%	6%
B	The plan check comments and corrections were clear and understandable		46%	29%	9%	7%	4%	6%
C	The plan review comments and corrections were consistent—there were no contradictions		47%	21%	9%	13%	5%	6%
D	Any plan review to be coordinated with other Departments was done so in a seamless manner		38%	25%	9%	14%	6%	7%
E	When you visited the counter, the amount of time that you had to wait before being assisted by Public Works Department staff was reasonable		45%	31%	2%	4%	4%	14%
F	Public Works Department staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer		47%	29%	5%	9%	4%	7%
G	Public Works Department staff were responsive		48%	29%	7%	8%	3%	6%
H	Public Works Department staff were courteous		59%	26%	3%	3%	3%	6%
I	Public Works Department staff were knowledgeable		51%	30%	5%	5%	3%	6%
J	Public Works Department staff were helpful		53%	24%	6%	9%	3%	6%
K	The turn-around time set by the Public Works Department for plan review was reasonable		41%	31%	9%	8%	3%	8%

L	The plan review process was completed by the target date set by the Public Works Department	40%	30%	9%	9%	3%	9%
M	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received from the Public Works Department	43%	33%	8%	9%	2%	4%

#### Section 9: Information Access

For the remaining questions, please answer for the City of San Jose as a whole.

Q13	Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to make development services information available through their web site, brochures and meetings? <i>Get answer, then ask: Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?</i>			
	1	Very satisfied	35%	
	2	Somewhat satisfied	44%	
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	8%	
	4	Very dissatisfied	4%	
	98	Not sure	9%	
	99	Refused	1%	
Q14	In the past 12 months, have you visited the City's Development Services web site?			
	1	Yes	62%	Ask Q15
	2	No	36%	Skip to Q16
	98	Not sure	2%	Skip to Q16
	99	Refused	0%	Skip to Q16
Q15	Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the content of the web site? <i>Get answer, then ask: Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?</i>			
	1	Very satisfied	33%	
	2	Somewhat satisfied	52%	
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	11%	
	4	Very dissatisfied	2%	
	98	Not sure	2%	
	99	Refused	0%	

**Section 10: Ideas for Improving Service**

**Q16** We'd like your ideas on how the City can improve the service that it provides in the area of development services. What one or two changes or improvements would you most like the City make? *Verbatim responses coded into following categories.*

Not sure	22%
None / Everything is fine	18%
Improve online access to info	8%
Decrease turnaround times	8%
Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	6%
Prefer not to answer	6%
Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness	4%
Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency	3%
Improve intra-departmental communication	3%
Improve responsiveness, attentiveness	3%
Increase staffing	2%
Improve scheduling, appointment process	2%
Improve, simplify process	2%
Provide staff with training on atypical projects	2%
Reduce number of contacts to complete project	2%
Ensure availability, clarity of info, codes, forms	2%
Increase departmental communication to customers	2%
Allow flexibility, reasonableness for interpretation	1%
Increase accessibility of personnel	1%
Eliminate unnecessary late hits	1%
Invest necessary time on plan checks, inspections	1%
Decrease wait times at office	1%
Commit to appointment times and deadlines	1%
Increase general training and knowledge	1%
Allow simple tasks to be accomplished by walk-in	1%



**Section 11: Perceptions of City**

Q17	Next, I'm going to read several statements about the City of San Jose I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement as they apply to development services.						
	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement, or do you not have an opinion? ( <i>Get answer. If agree or disagree, ask</i> ): Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree).						
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The City cares about its customers	34%	43%	8%	6%	8%	1%
B	The City acknowledges when a mistake has been made	18%	31%	15%	11%	20%	6%
C	If a mistake is made, the City does its best to fix the mistake	23%	30%	14%	8%	20%	5%
D	The City does an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project	21%	32%	10%	8%	23%	7%
E	Overall, the City has improved its customer service in the past 12 months	27%	30%	9%	7%	23%	5%

**Section 12: Background Questions**

Q18	In the past 12 months, approximately how many development services projects have you worked on with the City of San Jose?			
	1	33%		
	2 to 3	30%		
	4 to 5	13%		
	6 to 10	11%		
	11 or more	7%		
	Not sure / Refused	7%		
Q19	Were any of your projects in process with the City between November 29th and December 12th of this year?			
	1	Yes	50%	Ask Q20
	2	No	44%	Skip Q20
	98	Not sure	5%	Skip Q20
	99	Refused	1%	Skip Q20

Q20	Did you have an inspection scheduled between November 29th and December 12th of this year, or try to schedule an inspection during this period?		
	1	Yes	47%
	2	No	41%
	98	Not sure	11%
	99	Refused	1%

Post-Interview Items			
D1	Form of Interview		
	1	Phone	53%
	2	Web	47%

## DISCRETIONARY VERSION



City of San Jose Development Services  
2008 Customer Satisfaction Survey  
Final Toplines: Discretionary (n = 228)

### Section 1: Introduction to Study

Hi, may I please speak to: \_\_\_\_\_. Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling from True North Research on behalf of the City of San Jose. I'm following up on a letter you should have received a few weeks ago from the City which invited you to participate in a customer survey regarding development services. Our records indicate that you have yet to take the survey over the Internet, so we'd like to ask you a few questions over the telephone.

*If needed:* We're conducting a brief and confidential survey of people who have received building permit, plan check and inspection services from the City of San Jose.

*If needed:* Your name and contact information was included on a recent permit application for the City of San Jose—which is why we'd like to ask you about your experience.

*If needed:* The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete.

*If needed:* If now is not a convenient time, can you let me know a better time so I can call back?

*If needed:* You are also welcome to participate in the survey online, as described in the invitation letter we recently sent you.

*If needed:* Your answers will be kept anonymous and will be combined with the answers of other people who participate in the survey.

### Section 2: Screener for Inclusion in the Study

SC1	Our records indicate that you worked with the City of San Jose on at least one project during the past 12 months. Is this correct?				
SC2	1	Yes	100%	Continue	
	2	No	0%	Terminate	
	99	Refused	0%	Terminate	
	Was your most recent project ministerial (mini-steer-ee-al) or discretionary? <i>If unsure, clarify:</i> Most projects are ministerial projects. As long as they comply with the Municipal Code, they have to be approved. Ministerial projects do not involve a public hearing.				
	A discretionary project is a project that requires a public hearing related to a conditional use permit or zone change. Even if the project complies with the Municipal Code, the decision-makers still have some discretion in deciding whether to approve the project.				
	1	Ministerial	Switch to Ministerial Version of Q		
	2	Discretionary	Stay with Discretionary Version of Q		
	98	Not sure	Switch to Ministerial Version of Q		
	99	Refused	Terminate		
SC3	For your most recent discretionary project, were you personally involved in the: _____ stage of the project?				
Do Not Randomize			Yes	No	Not sure
A	Permit application		88%	12%	0%
B	Project review		89%	11%	1%
C	Public hearing		59%	39%	3%
If SC3a = (2, 99), SC3b = (2, 99) AND SC3c = (2, 99) then terminate interview.					

SC4	Did you personally work with a Project Manager assigned by the City to the project?		
	1	Yes	77%
	2	No	20%
	98	Not sure	4%
	99	Refused	0%

### Section 3: Overall Satisfaction & Role

In answering the questions in this survey, I'd like you to focus on your experience with your most recent discretionary project with the City.

Q1	Which of the following best describes your role on this project? <i>Multiple responses allowed.</i>		
	1	Owner	40%
	2	Architect	21%
	3	Engineer	14%
	4	Contractor	20%
	5	Permit Runner	10%
	6	Agent/Representative	25%
	7	Planner	11%
	8	Other	8%
	98	Not sure	0%
	99	Refused	0%
Q2	Was your most recent project for a residential property, a commercial property, or a mixed use property?		
	1	Residential	45%
	2	Commercial	38%
	3	Mixed use	17%
	98	Not sure	0%
	99	Refused	0%

Q3	Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the service that you received from the City of San Jose on this project? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?		
	1	Very Satisfied	37%
	2	Somewhat Satisfied	31%
	3	Somewhat Dissatisfied	19%
	4	Very Dissatisfied	12%
	98	Not sure	1%
	99	Refused	0%

#### Section 4: Permit Application

*Only ask questions in this section if SC3a = 1. Otherwise, skip to instructions for Section 5.*

Next, I'm going to read several statements about submitting a Planning permit application during the entitlement stage of the process. I'd like you to tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.

Q4	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be strongly or somewhat (agree/disagree)?						
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The process and steps needed to submit a permit application were clearly communicated	36%	37%	11%	12%	1%	2%
B	You received clear and correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit	43%	28%	15%	10%	0%	2%
C	You received a clear explanation of the fees	40%	31%	12%	10%	3%	3%
D	The fees were assessed accurately	42%	30%	7%	8%	7%	5%
E	When you came in to submit your application, the amount of time that you had to wait before being assisted by staff was reasonable	45%	34%	7%	5%	4%	5%
F	The permit application counter staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	45%	33%	7%	4%	2%	7%
G	The staff at the permit application counter were accessible	47%	32%	4%	5%	3%	7%
H	The staff at the permit application counter were responsive	45%	33%	6%	6%	1%	8%
I	The staff at the permit application counter were courteous	60%	24%	4%	2%	1%	7%
J	The staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	35%	35%	11%	9%	2%	7%

K	The staff at the permit application counter were helpful	45%	33%	8%	5%	1%	7%
L	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received during the permit application stage of the process	36%	39%	11%	10%	1%	3%

#### Section 5: Project Review

Only ask questions in this section if SC3b = 1. Otherwise, skip to instructions for Section 6.

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the City's process of reviewing the plans you submitted for a Planning permit. I'd like you to tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.

Q5 Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? *Get answer, then ask:* Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?

	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable	30%	40%	15%	11%	0%	3%
B	The plan review comments and corrections were based on reasonable interpretations of the code	29%	37%	13%	15%	2%	2%
C	The plan review comments and corrections made sense for the project	30%	34%	16%	17%	0%	3%
D	The plan review comments and corrections were consistent—there were no contradictions	27%	26%	22%	20%	1%	4%
E	Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time—there were no late hits	27%	25%	19%	26%	0%	3%
F	There was adequate communication among City staff about the project during the plan review	25%	33%	19%	19%	1%	2%
G	The number of plan rechecks was reasonable	30%	35%	12%	14%	3%	6%
H	The plan review staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	36%	34%	13%	13%	1%	2%
I	The plan review staff were responsive	38%	34%	10%	16%	1%	1%
J	The plan review staff were courteous	54%	33%	6%	4%	1%	1%
K	The plan review staff were knowledgeable	39%	33%	15%	11%	1%	1%
L	The plan review staff were helpful	41%	32%	15%	11%	1%	1%
M	The turn-around time set by the City for plan review was reasonable	23%	36%	18%	21%	1%	1%
N	The plan review process was completed by the target date set by the City	24%	24%	16%	29%	4%	3%
O	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received during the plan review stage	31%	34%	17%	17%	0%	2%

**Section 6: Project Manager**

*Only ask questions in this section if SC4 = 1. Otherwise, skip to instructions for Section 7.*

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the project manager assigned to the project by the City. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.

Q6 Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? *Get answer, then ask:* Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?

	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The process and steps needed to get to a public hearing were clearly communicated by the project manager	35%	27%	15%	9%	3%	10%
B	Once all of your documents were ready, the project manager scheduled you for a hearing within a reasonable amount of time	38%	25%	11%	9%	3%	14%
C	The project manager provided you with a reasonable estimate of the processing costs throughout the project	30%	29%	14%	11%	6%	10%
D	Your project comment letter was accurate and complete	33%	28%	17%	11%	4%	7%
E	The project manager was responsive	43%	28%	11%	14%	1%	4%
F	The project manager was courteous	57%	30%	5%	2%	2%	4%
G	The project manager was knowledgeable	45%	28%	13%	9%	1%	5%
H	The project manager was helpful	47%	29%	10%	7%	2%	4%
I	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received from the project manager	39%	29%	14%	13%	1%	4%

**Section 7: Public Hearing**

*Only ask questions in this section if SC3c = 1. Otherwise, skip to Section 8.*

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the public hearing process. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.

Q7 Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? *Get answer, then ask:* Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?

	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The project comment letter provided clear and correct instructions about the documents needed before a public hearing could be scheduled	37%	32%	12%	7%	5%	6%

B	You were given adequate time to review the permits and resolutions prior to the public hearing.	42%	35%	7%	7%	4%	5%
C	You were given adequate information by staff about how the public hearing process would go	48%	38%	4%	6%	1%	2%
D	At the public hearing, your item was heard within a reasonable amount of time	44%	35%	10%	6%	2%	3%
E	At the public hearing, staff represented your project in a fair and professional manner	56%	27%	5%	5%	2%	4%
F	At the public hearing, the decision makers were fair in how they made their decisions	51%	28%	7%	6%	4%	4%
G	The Public Outreach process is fair and reasonable	38%	39%	7%	9%	4%	4%
H	The appeal process is fair and reasonable	25%	27%	5%	6%	16%	21%
I	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received during the public hearing stage	40%	39%	11%	6%	2%	1%

## Section 8: Fire

Q8	In the past six months, did one or more of your projects require a permit, project review or inspection from San Jose's Fire Department?						
	1	Yes	56%		Ask Q9		
	2	No	39%		Skip to Q10		
	98	Not sure	5%		Skip to Q10		
	99	Refused	0%		Skip to Q10		
Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San Jose's Fire Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Fire Department.							
Q9	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?						
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>		Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure
A	The process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated by Fire Department staff		37%	34%	12%	7%	5%
B	The plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable		41%	34%	8%	7%	5%
C	The plan review comments and corrections were consistent—there were no contradictions		41%	27%	13%	9%	5%
D	Any plan review to be coordinated with other Departments was done so in a seamless manner		24%	36%	18%	9%	7%



E	When you visited the counter, the amount of time that you had to wait before being assisted by Fire Department staff was reasonable	37%	26%	4%	2%	9%	22%
F	Fire Department staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	46%	25%	8%	4%	7%	10%
G	Fire Department staff were responsive	44%	30%	9%	5%	5%	8%
H	Fire Department staff were courteous	55%	23%	4%	2%	5%	10%
I	Fire Department staff were knowledgeable	48%	27%	6%	3%	6%	9%
J	Fire Department staff were helpful	46%	30%	6%	2%	6%	9%
K	The turn-around time set by the Fire Department for plan review was reasonable	38%	31%	11%	9%	5%	6%
L	The plan review process was completed by the target date set by the Fire Department	34%	31%	9%	9%	9%	9%
M	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received from the Fire Department	38%	36%	12%	5%	5%	3%

#### Section 9: Public Works

**Q10** In the past six months, did one or more of your projects require a permit, project review or inspection from San Jose's Public Works Department?

1	Yes	47%	Ask Q11
2	No	46%	Skip to Q12
98	Not sure	7%	Skip to Q12
99	Refused	0%	Skip to Q12

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San Jose's Public Works Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Public Works Department.

**Q11** Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? *Get answer, then:* Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?

	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated by Public Works Department staff	29%	37%	18%	11%	3%	3%
B	The plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable	26%	35%	19%	10%	4%	6%
C	The plan review comments and corrections were consistent—there were no contradictions	26%	28%	24%	13%	5%	5%
D	Any plan review to be coordinated with other Departments was done so in a seamless manner	23%	25%	24%	19%	5%	4%

E	When you visited the counter, the amount of time that you had to wait before being assisted by Public Works Department staff was reasonable	32%	29%	6%	2%	9%	22%
F	Public Works Department staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	38%	30%	11%	10%	2%	9%
G	Public Works Department staff were responsive	37%	33%	13%	8%	3%	6%
H	Public Works Department staff were courteous	54%	31%	5%	4%	2%	6%
I	Public Works Department staff were knowledgeable	41%	34%	10%	6%	3%	6%
J	Public Works Department staff were helpful	43%	32%	12%	6%	3%	5%
K	The turn-around time set by the Public Works Department for plan review was reasonable	24%	27%	22%	15%	4%	8%
L	The plan review process was completed by the target date set by the Public Works Department	24%	22%	20%	15%	7%	11%
M	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received from the Public Works Department	28%	40%	19%	8%	1%	5%

#### Section 10: Information Access

For the remaining questions, please answer for the City of San Jose as a whole.

Q12	Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to make development services information available through their web site, brochures and meetings? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?			
	1	Very satisfied	29%	
	2	Somewhat satisfied	44%	
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	14%	
	4	Very dissatisfied	7%	
	98	Not sure	5%	
	99	Refused	0%	
Q13	In the past 12 months, have you visited the City's Development Services web site?			
	1	Yes	74%	Ask Q14
	2	No	25%	Skip to Q15
	98	Not sure	0%	Skip to Q15
	99	Refused	0%	Skip to Q15

Q14	Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the content of the web site? <i>Get answer, then ask: Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?</i>		
	1	Very satisfied	31%
	2	Somewhat satisfied	54%
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	9%
	4	Very dissatisfied	5%
	98	Not sure	1%
	99	Refused	0%

#### Section 11: Ideas for Improving Service

Q15	We'd like your ideas on how the City can improve the service that it provides in the area of development services. What one or two changes or improvements would you most like the City make? <i>Verbatim responses coded into following categories.</i>		
	Not sure		19%
	None / Everything is fine		14%
	Improve, simplify process		8%
	Prefer not to answer		8%
	Improve intra-departmental communication		7%
	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees		6%
	Decrease turnaround times		5%
	Improve online access to info		4%
	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness		4%
	Take responsibility for, correct mistakes / Increase accountability		4%
	Increase general training and knowledge		4%
	Increase customer guidance, support		3%
	Commit to appointment times and deadlines		3%
	Reduce number of contacts to complete project		3%
	Improve responsiveness, attentiveness		3%
	Allow flexibility, reasonableness for interpretation		2%
	Eliminate unnecessary late hits		2%
	Ensure availability, clarity of info, codes, forms		2%
	Improve Public Works stage of process		2%
	Increase staffing		1%
	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency		1%

Provide inspectors proficient with customer's language	1%
Increase accessibility of personnel	1%
Invest necessary time on plan checks, inspections	1%
Decrease wait times at office	1%
Provide staff with training on atypical projects	1%
Allow simple tasks to be accomplished by walk-in	1%
Improve in-house computer system	1%
Improve Fire Department stage of process	1%

#### Section 12: Perceptions of City

Q16 Next, I'm going to read several statements about the City of San Jose I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement as they apply to development services.

Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement, or do you not have an opinion? (*Get answer. If agree or disagree, ask:* Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree).)

	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The City cares about its customers	30%	41%	14%	9%	5%	1%
B	The City acknowledges when a mistake has been made	19%	32%	18%	18%	10%	3%
C	If a mistake is made, the City does its best to fix the mistake	21%	35%	16%	14%	12%	3%
D	The City does an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project	25%	38%	18%	10%	7%	2%
E	Overall, the City has improved its customer service in the past 12 months	24%	31%	14%	12%	15%	4%

**Section 13: Background Questions**

Q17	In the past 12 months, approximately how many development services projects have you worked on with the City of San Jose?		
	1		39%
	2 to 3		26%
	4 to 5		14%
	6 to 10		10%
	11 or more		8%
	Not sure / Refused		4%
Q18	Were any of your projects in process with the City between November 29th and December 12th of this year?		
	1	Yes	61% Ask Q19
	2	No	33% Skip Q19
	98	Not sure	3% Skip Q19
	99	Refused	3% Skip Q19
Q19	Did you have an inspection scheduled between November 29th and December 12th of this year, or try to schedule an inspection during this period?		
	1	Yes	37%
	2	No	57%
	98	Not sure	6%
	99	Refused	1%

**Post-Interview Items**

D1	Form of Interview		
	1	Phone	50%
	2	Web	50%